



East Midlands in Bloom

Entrants Reports 2022



East Midlands in Bloom Reports 2022

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SMALL VILLAGE CATEGORY

SPONSORED BY FCC ENVIRONMENT



SMALL VILLAGE

Ranby

BRONZE

Judged on July 5th 2022
Constable

Judges : Liz Alun-Jones, John

Judges award: The Cuckoo Way adjacent to the Chesterfield Canal.

Introduction :

We were met at the entrance to the village by Clive Hebdon who accompanied us on our tour of the village. Clive mentioned eight villagers who assisted in specific areas, but he was the mainstay of the Ranby Bloom project and would benefit from more active help. Despite a shortage of numbers, it was gratifying to see that even a few participants can make a difference.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Planters and planted areas well maintained as were those down Old Blyth Rd. Attractive vibrant colours of begonias in the tub alongside Old Blyth Rd was maintained by neighbours. Plant quality was satisfactory in a range of containers. Main grass areas were well maintained.

Section B

Encouraging to hear of water harvesting - some pictures or evidence would be valuable for future entries. We were told that containers growing plants are filled with peat free compost.

Areas alongside route clean, tidy and litter free. Street furniture was reasonably well maintained.

Section C

Planting along bus stops maintained by neighbours. Village hall area well maintained. Good to hear of cherry trees donated by a local planted near the public house - hopefully, they can be kept growing during this dry spell. Good to hear of a group of eight people involved with village maintenance.

Areas for Development

Section A

Beechwood Crescent planting is nicely maintained: here the surround of the raised bed needs refurbishing, and we were told this was going to happen. The raised brick bed near the pub was well maintained but plants were rather stunted: consider using some more drought resistant plants such as Eryngium rather than traditional geraniums and more

vibrant colours in baskets on posts. Perhaps also consider stronger and coordinated colours in containers - especially those raised up lamp/electric posts to attract attention. Coordinate colours to have consistency and a theme running through village. A lack of plant vigour was evident on occasions; aim to improve the feeding regime. Grass growing alongside containers and posts needs some attention. We saw a very well maintained garden at the south end of the village adjacent to the Old Blyth Road - it would make a good entry to the Frank Constable Best Front Garden competition.

Section B

The Bus Shelter would benefit from some maintenance. At the second bus stop we visited, alongside The Old Blyth Road, planting was a little overgrown and some maintenance would be beneficial. The surround to the raised bed at the junction of The Conifers and Beechwood Crescent would benefit from some maintenance - planting was good and well maintained. Could more use be made of the Chesterfield canal, both its history and the surrounding environment, to benefit the community? Chesterfield canal history and the towpath [The Cuckoo way] would be something to use more extensively with future judging. A number of projects could be based around it, e.g., wildlife recording etc., and these have potential for advancement.

It was disappointing that Bassetlaw Council cannot regularly sweep road sides.

Demonstrations of composting, rainwater harvesting, and other environmentally positive actions would be a positive initiative

Section C

Information boards alongside canal, relating to the history and surrounding environment would be of interest. Closer links should be made with Ranby C of E Primary school when situation permits - school use of the village environment would be a good thing to encourage? It was disappointing that the cherry trees close to the pub had suffered to lack of water during Clive's holiday. A portfolio would be useful in the future to demonstrate all year round care and attention and how areas of the village looked during other seasons. Engage with local youth groups cub/scouts/guides et al, also the WI and other adult organisations?

Scores: A: 24 B: 17 C: 15 TOTAL: 56



SMALL VILLAGE

Tattershall Thorpe

Judged on July 5th 2022
Constable

SILVER GILT

Judges : Liz Alun-Jones, John

Judges award: To the Jubilee/Bloom Group for the decoration and maintenance of the area around the Old Chapel

Introduction:

Tattershall Thorpe is a parish virtually surrounded by sand and gravel workings, with many of the old sites now converted to fishing lakes and environmental areas. We were met by Servais Coulber who leads the Tattershall in Bloom group, re-named for 2022 as "The Jubilee Group". The village demographic is mainly retirees and younger representation came from visiting friends and relatives. The village is mainly surrounded by a fairly featureless landscape but has some surrounding woodland as well as old gravel extraction which has allowed the formation of the many lakes which attract wildlife and allow amenity use.

Areas of Achievement

Section A :Horticulture

Serv Coulber grows very good plants from seed or occasionally plugs to supply for village decoration. The standard of planting and plants was very good and everywhere we visited we could see they were well maintained. The surrounds to village signs were either planted or planters had been positioned nearby and were well maintained - the corner of B1192 and Chapel Lane very tidy, bright, and attractive. Similarly, the junction with Pauls Lane at the other end of village. The planted area next to bus stop in the village eye catching and well maintained.

The area around northerly entrance to the village at the junction of North Rd with Woodhall Road was very attractive with a combination of annuals, perennials, and evergreen shrubs. The planting on small road island nearby was attractive and well maintained and the nearby bus stop had been nicely planted with a sustainable mixture of annuals, perennials, and evergreens - roses, surrounded by annuals formed a centre piece for the island. Good to see pictures of autumn planting of wall flowers and spring flowering bulbs at various village sites, later in the tour and in the portfolio.

Section B : Environment

The aforementioned gravel lakes provide both amenities use and an attraction for wildlife. The woodland adjoining the old airfield - which is now controlled by the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust which has converted it to a nature reserve - had provided a natural habitat for bats and bat boxes have also been erected in old war time shelters to encourage them. Planted self-watering containers had started to replace damaged stone troughs alongside the road at village extremes.

Sand martins were much in evidence around the gravel lake and bird boxes had been erected with the help of a local farmer.

Section C: Community

Many community activities were mentioned in the supplied portfolio and group annual report.

The street furniture was very well maintained. The area around the Charles and Diana tree - close to woodland and farmland was clean and tidy. Outside the Blue Bell Inn we saw well maintained hanging baskets.

The village is a working example of cooperation between the local Parish Council and the Jubilee/Bloom Group sharing the maintenance with positive results.

Areas for Development

Section A

The surroundings to main road running through the village don't readily lend themselves to change - road sides were reasonably tidy - and their situation often prevents amateur volunteer led maintenance. Some maintenance to areas near the bus stop in the middle of the village could be considered but it's far from an eyesore. Perhaps the area around the Charles and Diana tree could be enhanced?

Section B

Judges were not shown a village centre as such, but it would be interesting for some visitor information boards to be erected at suitable points explaining what makes Tattershall Thorpe unique? Perhaps mentioning its wartime role alongside the airbase? In addition, perhaps some plant and animal wildlife information - possibly worked in conjunction with the Lincs Wildlife Trust using the walks which pass through the woodlands to the West of the Coningsby/Woodhall road. Alternatively look at projects connected to the fishing lakes/conservation areas?

Wildlife information/recording might suit the age demographic?

Organising a tour for judges around a large parish with limited time is a challenge but would a brief visit to Annpasture Lane have been possible to witness the impressive sounding restoration mentioned in the annual report?

Section C

Some details of AYR activities were available on information boards and in the portfolio but perhaps the historic connection with the airfield or the woodland could be used to encourage some connections with local schools. The reports mentions home schooling and some community activities designed to appeal to a younger age group could be interesting. Suitable information boards around the woodland walks might help inform visitors?

A: 35 B: 20 C: 22 TOTAL: 77



Small Village

Amcotts

Judged on 4th July 2022
Alun-Jones

GOLD

Judges: John Constable and Liz

Judges Award: For the information hub in the former parish church and butterfly garden in the churchyard.

Introduction

The 262 villagers of Amcotts are a shining example of how residents can make a difference by working together. The emphasis is on child and family friendly activities with marked trails for spotting wildlife both real and imaginary. Amcotts has won numerous awards from CPRE and The John Muir Trust for conservation. The wildflower area in the churchyard, the information boards, owl trail and the parish church itself - now used as a community hub - are all excellent. In 2022 Amcotts was chosen to represent East Midlands in Bloom in the national awards.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The judges were escorted around the village by Tricia Murphy and Kev who introduced us to the neighbours known as Amcotts Grandmas and Grandads who maintain the planting, natural areas such as The Stumpery and trails to a very high standard. There are a number of roadside planters managed by local residents. All are colourful, healthy and well maintained. The antique potato planter at one of the roads into the village is lovely, with vibrant planting and an informative banner. Many of the local residents have delightful gardens and well managed planting visible from the road. Children with a local connection have been involved with planting up cheerful buckets with annuals. There are traditional tiered planters commemorating local events, the 1974 Flixborough disaster and the royal diamond jubilee. Pretty hanging baskets are placed adjacent to the information board on the Moor Woman. Low planters in the pub garden aim to encourage families with young children to become involved with growing and there is a quiz for identifying herbs.

Section B

The village school closed in 1960's but the small number of resident children (and visiting grandchildren) have ample opportunity to have fun learning from the information boards, trails and displays in the church which is now a community hub. The churchyard of St Thomas a Beckett is particularly impressive: having gained permission to use the land from the diocese it has been thoughtfully planted with wildflowers and sunflowers to attract pollinators. Small areas of planting, and tiny garden tools, ideal to encourage a contribution from young children were noted. The previous judge's comments were acted on and there is now have series of themed water butts. Street furniture was in good condition and very little litter was seen. The unique 'chatty benches' allowing people to socialise while socially isolating are both attractive and practical. There is a packed programme of activities throughout the year, many of which have a nature theme.

Section C

Your team is an outstanding example of how accessing funding from both local businesses and national charities can be achieved and utilised. Amcotts also appears expert at publicising achievements, and you have entered and won numerous awards for your environmental and wildlife awareness work. An impressive £6,500 was recently raised to commission new church doors. The Tiddy Munn and Owl Trails set out around Amcotts are both informative and fun for all ages. You have a dedicated group of senior volunteers and a list of jobs that working adults can help with in their own time. You have a full programme of events throughout the year including a bat walk at Hallowe'en, and a butterfly count in summer.

Areas for Development

Section A

The public planting on the roadside could be so much more impressive if it was brighter and with more height. There were a number of weeds on the paths and around planters. It would be worth accessing Granddad Murphy's expertise on begonias or other annuals and including those in your planters for maximum impact. Much of the planting on public display had been planted and chosen by children in the village: although this is highly commendable it may be worth increasing some of the planting by In Bloom group on public view for more impact. Some of the planting looked immature, this may well have been in readiness for August 4th.

Section B

A brief presentation explaining your development at the outset of the judges tour and a who's who would help the uninitiated. All the names which are very familiar to you (Tiddy Munn, all the grandmas and Granddads, Queen Rose and Boy Bishop) all takes a while for outsiders to understand despite having read your excellent little guide book. Some of the traditional tiered planters were looking a little tired and would benefit from a coat of paint. Similarly, the trellis at the Moor Woman board was a bit tired.

Section C

It is difficult to imagine what you could do to improve in this section. Maybe something a little easier (so the grandmas and Granddads don't burn out) next year e.g., a village composting scheme and mini beast survey. The icing on the cake would be to meet some younger people and children who have been involved.

Scores A:34 B:28 C:27 Total 89



SMALL VILLAGE

St Crispin Retirement Village

Judged on 11th July 2022

Griselda Kerr

Judges Award: The Gardening Club for their enthusiastic care of the lovely grounds of their retirement home.

Introduction

The grounds of St Crispin Retirement village are a delight! Every bed and border is a mass of colour created by Beryl and her gardening club. The quality of plant care is outstanding, with good use of perennials for seasonal interest and annuals propagated in house. Led by Beryl, Jenny and lifestyle coaches Anna and Hayley, we also met members of the gardening club including Joan, Pat and Yvonne and Stan who has worked on the new Wellbeing Garden. The funding you receive from management has been reduced but does not appear to have affected the quality of your entry.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The standard of care of the flowers, shrubs and trees is outstanding. Trees are well pruned; the soil appears healthy and well mulched, plants are disease free, and no weeds were seen. The Amelanchier planted for the recent jubilee appears healthy. The choice of mixed planting with shrubs in the borders and use of annuals including pelargoniums in the planters and occasional hanging basket works well. All the public areas are enhanced by planting of some kind with the bungalow garden particularly impressive. The Butterfly Garden is a welcome addition and is thoughtfully planted. The new Wellbeing Garden which includes a pond, bug hotel with a green roof and seating will be lovely when mature. The garden at the north entrance has year-round interest and some topiary. The rose garden is a joy. Roses, clematis, fruit trees and shrubs in this formal area are in peak condition and were wonderful to see. The only slightly disappointing area is the steep bank adjacent to the rose garden. You have tried unsuccessfully with a wildflower meadow but have wisely decided to keep it as grass. If funds were available you would choose to terrace it, which has been successful on a similar area.

Section B

Numerous water butts were seen, and there is an impressive composting corner. Homemade compost is used in the gardens. Most of the annuals are propagated from existing plants in the splendid greenhouse with potting benches at accessible heights, incredibly tidy stock of tools and a library. The pump for the new pond in the Wellbeing garden is solar powered. The planting in the butterfly garden is chosen to attract butterflies and there are bug hotels and bird boxes scattered throughout the site. We saw dragonflies around the pond. Outdoor seating is plentiful and well maintained and there are stylish new jubilee benches in the Wellbeing Garden.

Section C

Bulbs are planted for spring displays. Your choice of planting in the formal garden areas using perennials such as hydrangeas, heucheras, lavenders, clematis and several wisterias provides year-round interest. Hanging baskets made by the gardening club are available to buy to support future garden projects. There is a lovely informative sign in the butterfly garden. You have been successful in securing section 106 money from Upton PC which has supported the new Wellbeing Garden. You have close links with the neighbouring primary school. The children worked with the residents over a number of weeks to create a display of red, white and blue recycled plastic flowers to decorate the front lawn for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. A new scheme where St Crispin's will host the school's breakfast club in the rose garden is due to start soon.

Areas for Development

Section A

The new Wellbeing Garden is an opportunity to add another compost area if you wish and raised herb bed for anyone to pick herbs. This would be both attractive and useful. It would be good to see the water features working.

Section B

You already have plans to improve the hard landscaping in the Wellbeing Garden which will improve access for wheelchair users and people using mobility aids.

Section C

The standard of the work you have already achieved is amazing: however additional help from younger, fitter people would be a huge advantage. Consider contacting local D of E schemes, or youth groups such as scouts or guides to help as part of their community service. They could learn so much from your wealth of experience

Scores: A:38 B:26 C:26 TOTAL 90

VILLAGE CATEGORY

SPONSORED BY FCC ENVIRONMENT



CATEGORY VILLAGE

SOUTH FERRIBY

Level of Award: SILVER

Judged on 4th July

Judges: Liz Alun-Jones/John Constable

Judges Award: For the Village sign - Rowing Boat

Introduction:

South Ferriby is situated next to the Humber estuary and quite close to the Humber Bridge - parts of the village were flooded as recently as 2013. A significant part of the village of South Ferriby lies adjacent to the busy A1077; it tends to dominate the village and makes some of the efforts attempted by the Bloom group quite difficult to undertake. However what the group has achieved in the circumstances has added to the attractiveness of the village and anyone travelling along the A1077 cannot fail to notice the enhancements that have taken place. Some of the quieter areas of the village might be easier to maintain in the future - perhaps involving the local community more but having slightly less impact on passing traffic. 10 s f community gardeners The Bloom group that we met consisted of Dave Mouncey together with Donny & Virginia Scratherd and Ruth Johnson - the whole group comprises 10 who operate as South Ferriby Community Gardeners - the group would probably benefit from some involvement with the local primary school which had been attempted but without positive response so far.

Areas of Achievement

Section A: Horticulture

A large part of the diversified benefits of the Bloom group are small areas of mainly annual bedding scattered around the village, mainly alongside the A1077 road. These areas are relatively small and bordered by local stone but have the benefit of being easily manageable by independent smaller groups. The first of these we were shown was situated alongside the western approach to the village, they are easily visible from the road and certainly leave a passing motorist with an indication the locality is cared for - unfortunately we could not meet Lyn and Lesley who were responsible for their upkeep or Vicky and Helen - from Prospect Villas. The beds adjacent to the play school and on the junction of School Lane and High Street were clearly themed as well as being nicely maintained. Alongside the main road there was perhaps 75 m of a well maintained narrow flowerbed which did a good job of diverting attention from the wall behind. - mainly planted with annuals with a scattering of perennials - a larger area highlighted the junction with the Viking Way. All the water required for these areas was supplied by a spring that came from the hillside and we were

told that this supply was used for watering elsewhere in the village. The South Ferriby village sign was attractively highlighted with a small new boat planted with annuals. The Horse Pond was a lovely, well developed area, attractively and carefully maintained - a lovely village amenity which could be enjoyed from seating partly protected from the noise of passing traffic. An interesting Information board nearby documents 4,000 years of village history.

Section B: Environment

The tour featured clean and tidy streets - including the areas alongside the busy A1077. Naturally the quieter areas away from the main road are more natural habitats for wildlife and these had been enhanced with some bird and bat boxes. We were told of a wide variety of plant and animal life around the Horse pond, and we saw a large bug "hotel". There was some evidence of recycling taking place along the route - the use of the spring water for watering the planted areas on the village and water butts in the allotment harvesting rainwater off shed roofs. There was a well-positioned area of wild flowers as the Viking Way left the A1077 and climbed away into the woods.

Section C: Community

We met 4 a small group, as previously mentioned and heard of the involvement of 4 more who were unavailable on judging day - one of the flower beds was situated near to a small play school. The use of small flower beds - particularly alongside the A1077 - lends itself to small groups of volunteers undertaking relatively small and manageable areas and gives a clear impression of a cared for community to passing travellers

Areas for Development

The judging route took us alongside the A1077, the margins of which could be improved – however the nature of the road means that it is not a safe occupation for volunteers and the Bloom group rely on local authority cooperation. Excluding efforts of villagers alongside the route will discourage their contribution but increased efforts towards the East of the village might be easier for volunteer led efforts.

Section A

The planting alongside the A1077 might benefit from a little more colour/species coordination - this would reinforce to any passing motorists that the work was part of a planned village effort. It was disappointing the roadsides could not be cut to add to the effect of the planting which had taken place but due to the nature of the road out of the control of the Bloom group. The allotment area was dominated by a major, outstanding contribution from John [one of our hosts] and one other allotment holder - other allotments were mainly disappointing and needed attention.

Section B

Recording of wildlife would be a good occupation and might help increase the Bloom group membership. There might be plenty of potential from the adjacent woodland area now that the quarry has ceased operating - especially in quieter areas of the village away from the main road. A natural history information board near to the Viking Way route or towards the front of the pond? Are there quieter areas away from the main road within the village that could be involved in the group?

Section C

Involvement of children either from school or play school would be beneficial - or perhaps consider recruiting younger participants from within the community. Because of the limitations imposed by the A1077 some activities are challenging but perhaps increased highlighting of the woods could encourage wider the interests of potential new Bloom members?

A: 29 B: 21 C: 16 Total: 66



CATEGORY VILLAGE

Blooming Milford

Level of Award: Silver Gilt

Judged on 6th July 2022

Judges: John Constable, Griselda Kerr

Judges award: For the Orchard & wildflower area adjacent to the River Derwent and Millers Way

Introduction and Overall Impression

On the face of it Milford, part of a World Heritage Site could hardly be more difficult to present as a beautiful blooming village – the A6 runs through it beside the river Derwent which occasionally floods, sweeping away new planting whilst above, rises the steep sided foothills of the peak district formed of well-draining Millstone grit which holds neither nutrients nor water for very long . Yet, because of the efforts of The Blooming Milford group, the village is full of promise, community spirit and a tremendous sense of commitment, with orchards and gardens created along the river, a 'Green Space 'play area, with allotments carved out of an abandoned hillside and terraced houses brimming with flowers. We were shown round by David Moreton, Pat Hamilton, Jenny Butters, and Sheila Harman who are supported by eight other main helpers with another twenty young and old volunteers who are particularly involved with the Green Space Project.

Areas of Achievement

Section A: Horticulture

Blooming Milford has planted thousands of bulbs around the village, on the verges of the A6 and in other road verges, by bus stops, in the Triangle and Spring Garden, in Hopping Mill Meadow and in the Children's Play area abutting the A6 (where a large planter now replaces an area previously full of weeds over tarmac). Much of this is documented in the portfolio provided to judges. The herb planters in the Triangle were good. Hanging Baskets along the A6 were well tended, all well dead headed, with enough to enliven the A6 without having too many to look after well. On Hopping Mill Meadow there is excellent planting, well maintained, with year round interest. New allotments at Mary's Meadow are well tended and expanding. The well labelled fruit trees in the Community Orchard looked vigorous and healthy despite many being uprooted in the huge flooding of the Derwent in February this year. A heroic effort was made then to re-establish them after their submersion in six 'of flood water and most seem to be thriving. Many people would have given up. The wild meadow nearby, so difficult to establish, will get better over time as "thugs" such as brambles are removed. Meanwhile it is good to see seed heads being left in place. The gardens along Miller's Way were consistently beautifully maintained with interested and varied planting providing a wonderful example of how a modern development can include uplifting gardens.

Section B. Environment

Good to see bee/bug hotels in the Triangle and Green Space site where children can be encouraged to develop their interests. There is good biodiversity in all the areas we visited, often with excellent wildlife havens, as well as bat and bird boxes. A small pool in the Green Space encourages children to observe an aquatic environment in closeup, whilst the 'dead hedge' and wild flower patch provides an excellent environment for insects and small animals and encourages the children to appreciate the importance of wildlife. Trees and shrubs are being planted in many areas which will do much to help to mitigate atmospheric pollution in this area of the valley. It is good to see mown paths through areas of long grass excellent for wildlife

Section C. Community

Outstanding is the use of the Greenspace for children who previously had only tarmac to play on and who now can play in a mud kitchen, plant vegetables, plant plants, enjoy a small pool, play under wigwams, and gather with other members of the community around their fire pit. This was built with great determination, strength, and courage by the team of twenty volunteers, in itself a remarkable achievement as everything had to be carried up a large number of steep steps and over a ladder. The outreach of the Green Space to special needs children is wonderful and should be encouraged. Throughout Milford there is a sense of public engagement with Bloom. Acquiring the help of QTS, a leading rail contractor, to fund the cleaning of the A6 verges, around Milford Mills entrance and the War Memorial, meant that the village has been kept very clean. QTS also helped with the heavy clearance of overgrowth in Hopping Mill Meadow in preparation for the Autumn Garden planting was sponsored by AMG wealth. The excellent relationship with Belper Town Council is also very advantageous. Lubrizol provided materials for the Green Space. There is clearly a great deal of public engagement and Bloom are good at their public relations. It is nice to see a Queen's Green Canopy tree planted in the Community Orchard as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, still bedecked with Union Jacks. Free to pick apples and (in a few years' time, pears) in the Community Orchard is excellent.

Areas for Development:

We were short of time towards the end of the tour which was entirely on foot - excepting our visit to the Holly Bush. Maybe consider a similar starting point but after viewing the Triangle travel by car to somewhere adjacent to the war memorial

and continue from there. Roadside tubs/baskets could be highlighted from the car. The area around Miller's Way merited more attention. Time did not allow for the walk alongside the river which we were not able to complete. Milford might like to consider a separate entry into Its Your Neighbourhood for this area next year.

Section A

The planter by the children's play area and the others around Milford need some attention to look more vibrant – they need deadheading to prolong the season of interest and include a better choice of perennial plants for year round interest.

The soil in Green Space where plants are being grown needs at least an annual mulch, this will aid water retention and nourish the soil.

Section B

In the Green Space, attention needs to be given to the provision of water either from water butts or from storing captured water from the stream that runs through the area in winter. In addition, perhaps green roof could be established over one of the sheds in Greenspace. Capturing water from the stream in winter to use to beneficial effect in the Green Space also mulching the Green Space soil to retain water. Without this, the planting of the 'maze hedge' and other plants will not succeed, and the children may become disillusioned about planting plants. Sponsorship could be procured to construct on level soil, three proper compost bins to enable compost to be stored separately from invasive perennial weeds (like bindweed) Could the use of Greenspace be extended to a wider range of year groups?

Section C

The signage at the various points of interest could be improved (the Perspex has come to the end of its useful life) - Milford has such an interesting history. There could also be more signs to show examples of what animals and wild flowers can be found in the community areas.: On the edge of the A6 though next to the playground is an eyesore of an untended area in private ownership, once cleared by Blooming Milton but now sadly overgrown again. It would be good to see this cleared and applied to effective use if the owner could be persuaded.

A: 31 B: 24 C: 28 Total 83



CATEGORY : VILLAGE

Newton Solney

Level of Award: Silver Gilt

Judges: John Constable and Griselda Kerr

JUDGES AWARD : Jacob Dutton [10 years] for his enthusiastic contribution to the village Bloom group

Introduction

Newton Solney lies in pretty countryside near Repton, approximately 11 miles SW of Derby. On the day of the judging, it seemed that the village was en fête for this year of entry - the sun shone, and everyone was smiling. Ushered into an immaculate carpark, we were welcomed by Jacob Dutton (aged 10), Tim Norman, Karen Brittan, Chris Kitto, and Jo Mears and whisked off smartly to start the tour. There are 35 or so volunteers in the Bloom team with ages ranging from 4 year to 90 who meet twice a week to discuss the progress of Bloom throughout the year. Bloom in Newton Solney is evidently a year round commitment with involvement in all ages from pre-school, special needs children, primary and secondary school children who need sports facilities, adults enjoying their gardens, tennis and bowls clubs and alms house residents - this was comprehensively demonstrated by the spreadsheet detailing tasks, volunteer leaders and timings. There was an immediate, palpable sense of community which was perfectly summarised in the short video judges were shown in the church at the end of the tour.

Areas of Achievement

Section A: Horticulture

Consistently high quality front gardens with varied and interesting planting, no garden failing to please. Those such as Gail Archer's which had to rely almost entirely on pots was equally colourful and interesting with year round interest. Good, raised beds with healthy vegetables in the Pre-School enclosed ground Healthy, well maintained allotments alongside the Alms Houses - produce from which was given to the residents. Also at the Alms Houses was good uncluttered perennial planting with a well-kept lawn and newly planted fruit trees. Planters in evidence in many places containing healthy pest free, well mulched perennials and herbs, planted by young and old. Excellent hanging tubs and baskets on the Brickmakers Arms pub, well maintained and using peat free compost. Compost for other baskets is made in the Bloom Groups own three compost bins (labelled Tom, Dick and Harry) for all flower baskets (with the addition of peat free compost as needed). A small wild flower meadow is being developed in the churchyard - alongside was a container made by Jacob Dutton and planted with herbs for villager use. Early and late spring bulbs had been planted in many areas. The grass bank along roadsides looked excellent and well-tended with perennials well suited to add year round interest and colour to this public area.

Section B: Environment

Everywhere on the route had clean sharp edges and clear gutters. There was no litter to be seen. There are intentional overgrown areas such as in the churchyard between mown paths, the long grass left untrampled for wildlife. Care is taken not to spoil this when tending the gravestones. Excellent work being done at preschool level to introduce children to the concepts of wind and solar power and to the dangers of pollution in the ocean. Bat and bird boxes were in evidence and an awareness of hedgehog needs is evident. Herb and flower containers are made and planted by a Bloom volunteer young and old. There was good use of discreet water butts around the village.

Section C: Community

All ages of school children from infants to secondary and including children with special needs from Bladen Special Needs School had been involved in the preparation for Bloom Day. The bus shelter had been rubbed down and re-stained (and surrounding brambles removed) to look very welcoming - public benches have been restored by the community also with help from the Parish Council. Some individual gravestones in the churchyard are adopted and cared for by members of the community. The efforts to maintain and enhance the environment for the elderly in the Alms Houses is much to be commended - first by protecting the communal front garden from development, then maintaining the lawn and newly planted fruit trees. Plant sales had raised considerable sums for Bloom and provide an agreeable social gathering. NS Parish Council were very supportive - and will make a contribution to the new Play Park. Fundraising for a new pavilion and sports facilities on the recreation ground is spearheaded by Bloom with the help of South Derbyshire District Council which requires match funding. A heritage board can be erected with support from was it also East Midlands Airport community fund.

Areas for development

Section A

The triangle at the junction of Repton Road and Newton Lane would perhaps benefit from suitable planting - is it/could it be enhanced by some native bulb species- bluebells? Or perhaps establish some low maintenance wild life habitat? We passed some delightful gardens on the route - several could be suitable future entries for the EMIB Frank Constable MBE Front Garden competition. Most of what we saw was very well maintained without always being eye-catching - not something for areas adjacent to the main road but perhaps the proposed addition of fruit trees to commemorate war losses could become a focal point?

Section B

It would have been nice to see some more information boards with reference to the history of Newton Solney – it would appear that many village facilities were largely built and/or donated by the Ratcliffe family trust, the brewing family that owned much of the village as well as other benefactors. What is unique about Newton Solney? Perhaps something in association with the memorial fruit trees mentioned in 'A' above or related to the brick making industry of the 18th & 19th centuries? Are there areas in the village where wildlife and plant species can be enhanced and recorded to increase local interest in the environment? Can the area around the river Trent be accessed and used safely? This could continue the theme started at the pre-school where the raised beds had 4 themes [Insects/environment/vegetable growing and flowering] perhaps some records could be

kept at that site too? If the area adjoining the river/s is inaccessible perhaps the churchyard could be further developed.

Section C

Increased use of the Recreational ground will be good to see if planned developments take place. Possibly involve a wider range of local community groups in the Bloom efforts.

Scores - A: 35 B: 22 C: 27 Total: 84

LARGE VILLAGE CATEGORY

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Large Village

Deeping St Nicholas

Level of Award: Bronze

Judged on 5th July 2022

Judges: Liz Alun-Jones and John Constable

Judges Award: The members of the Gardening Club for creating a sense of community and a promising first entry to East Midlands in Bloom.

Introduction

This was a first entry into East Midlands in Bloom for Deeping St Nicholas. The gardening club was established in 2020 during the pandemic. As villagers began to socialise more with their neighbours and spend more time outdoors in their own neighbourhood a group decided to improve the impact and attractiveness of their village. The judges were impressed by the group's early achievements and the number of volunteers engaged in such a short time. Deeping St. Nicholas is arguably the longest village in England with no obvious centre but the development of The Village Triangle and the proposed new Village Hall will help bring the community closer together.

Areas of Achievement

Section A: Horticulture

Being such a new group many projects we were shown are only just being established, but the impressive core team of 8 and the number of additional volunteers (18), the careful planning and quality of the work you have achieved to date on 'The Triangle' is very encouraging for the group's future development. Deeping St Nicholas is one of the longest villages in England with a population of just over 1,500. The village straddles 7 miles on both sides of the busy A1175 and the main road is crossed by a mainline railway. It does not have an obvious village centre. There is a church, and a village primary school. A large housing estate was built 17 years ago and now has many established gardens, open spaces, and mature trees as well as views to open countryside making it a pleasant and peaceful place to live. There are plans to build an additional 280 new homes and a village hall. The lovely wildflower meadow gardens of the Vine House café are used by residents as an informal meeting place. We were met by Simon and Pauline who are part of the committee of six who have initiated the impressive additions to their community. Small wooden planters (made from donated materials by a local man) have been planted up along the busy A1175. It was not possible to see them other than from passing car and so we could not reliably judge the quality. However, we were told that plants had been chosen to withstand the strong prevailing winds and buffeting from passing lorries. The planters were colourful and cheerful and strategically placed under entrance signs to the village. A large tonne bag has also been planted up by a local business with some advertising and is easily visible. The very

new planting in the gravel garden by The Triangle is attractive but immature at this stage. Plants were healthy and clearly labelled. They have been carefully chosen for their sensory appeal and should be a lovely display given time.

Section B : Environnent

As previously mentioned, the layout of Deeping St Nicholas does not naturally lend itself to a central community space. Through the community project of preparing for In Bloom and designing and planting up the large area of The Triangle, which is like a village green, the community has noticeably come together. Hopefully the Village Hall will significantly add to this when completed. The attractive jubilee benches in the seating area on the triangle were commissioned from a local craftsman. They have been thoughtfully designed to make them accessible to wheelchairs and buggies. The newly planted wildflower area on the village triangle is planted with native wild flowers and trees for autumn and winter colour. At present water is carried to the triangle from willing neighbour's taps. There is an established watering rota. A stand pipe has been requested which will reduce this tiresome work. You have sourced compost from a local supplier. A grant from EMiB has been used to purchase native trees for the woodland area on the triangle.

Section C : Community

Your project is still in its infancy, but you have firm plans in place for the future. You have organised planting up days and hope to involve the local scout group in planting up next time, You have sourced funding from local businesses and national charities and are aware of the importance of keeping the community informed using social media and the local press. You supported the primary school in planting sunflowers in their small garden.

Areas for Development

Section A

In time you may wish to consider increasing the size and height of the planters on the main road to make them more visible to passing traffic. Planters with reservoirs could reduce the problems of watering on such a busy highway. A1/2

Section B

An information board about the plant and insect species in the wildflower area could be considered.

It would be worth considering an information board about Deeping St Nicholas, the history it's place in local heritage etc. The proposed Village Hall would be a good place to site this.

Section C

As your project develops it would be good to take photos of events such as spring planting, litter picking, ground clearance and social events taking place on The Triangle, not only for your own records but it would significantly help future judges to understand what work you are doing if these are presented in a portfolio. You already have links with the village primary school and in future a visit to the school would be good if possible. Consider asking local businesses or villagers to sponsor planters with a credit on the planter itself.

The wild flower meadow at the Vine House Farm café is lovely and should be included in future judge's itinerary

Score A:21 B:18 C:15 TOTAL 54 points



LARGE VILLAGE

Barrow upon Humber

Level of Award: SILVER GILT

Judged on 13th July
Welburn

Judges: Jeff Bates & Richard

Judges Award: For the extensive tree planting around the Village, including the 100 trees initiative by the WI

Introduction

A warm and sunny morning greeted the judges on their first visit to this entrant. After a brief introduction to their entry at the Vicar's Room, a walking tour ensued, which took in Midby Park, the newer residential areas of Franklin Way and Palmer Lane, the historic pump on Beck Lane and ending at the Market Place where the John Harrison statue forms an excellent centre-piece. The well-planned tour concluded at the Vicar's Room with light refreshments, a chance to meet the rest of the team and 'press interviews.'

Areas of Achievement Section A

Floral areas throughout the village were in good condition, including the range of wheelbarrows seen, front gardens on Cherry Lane and Palmer Lane, residential frontages on High Street, and businesses including Sargent's Butchers and Bakery and the Squash Club. Displays by Barrow in Bloom were in very good condition and seen prominently around the tour, including at the Beck Pump and Palmer Lane. Extensive new tree planting is evident especially in the lovely Midby Park, a most attractive area of mature green space where floral additions have appropriately been limited. There is significant evidence of Ash die-back here which the team (and local authority) are aware of and is being taken into consideration as part of future plans. Attempts are being made to increase the amount of 'annual wildflower mixes' used in grass verges and also in Midby Park, and this is to be welcomed.

Section B Environment

Notice boards, in particular the village map on High Street, installed as part of the Better Barrow initiative, are in good condition throughout; all were clean and informative. Seats are well-positioned and in good condition. The 'local identity' highlight is the Longitude statue of John Harrison, in the Market Place, with cleverly-designed and appropriate seating accompanying this.

The tour was very clean throughout, with minimal evidence of any adverse intrusions. Local children, including from the John Harrison school, take part in litter-picking activities. As noted above, new tree-planting (in part using trees 'rescued' locally from elsewhere) is prominent and is appropriate where seen, notably in Midby Park where mature trees had been lost to storm damage. The introduction of annual wildflower planting in Midby Park has struggled due to the conditions but was beginning to show colour at the time of the

visit. Midby Park also includes a developing bug-hotel. The team are considering creating strips of 'cornfield annuals' in some of the wide grass verges, with which the judges agree. All containers are filled with peat-free growing medium, and plants are locally sourced.

Section C Community

The portfolio and tour demonstrated very clearly that Barrow upon Humber did indeed 'Bloom Again' as the cover of the portfolio stated. Evidence was seen of involvement by groups including the Better Barrow initiative, local businesses, Women's Institute and of course the Wheelbarrow Weekend. Information boards and signs were prominent, informative, and clean. The close working arrangement with local contractor Nettleton Mowing and Maintenance, based in the village (and with Jon and Alison with us throughout the tour) is incredibly positive as they clearly 'go the extra mile' to ensure that the village is well-maintained.

Future plans to bring back into full use the playing field, restore the Market Place to its historic use and bring the John Harrison School into the judging tour (and encourage its participation into EMiB Best School Garden category). These show that the future of Barrow upon Humber in Bloom is focused and positive.

Areas for Development Section A

The judges were impressed by the floral planting around the village, and in particular as seen on village entrances, which you might consider including as part of a brief 'vehicle tour' in future years, as these were only noticed by the judges prior to and post the actual tour. We applaud the new tree planting, which is doing very well in Midby Park, but rather less-so on Palmer Lane, where although watering has been taking place, it has not been sufficient given the prevailing weather conditions, and this should be a focus for all future planting. After the tour had concluded, on our return to 'base,' we passed excellent residential gardens on Martin's Close. Consideration should be given to ensuring that this is on the route in future.

Section B

The initiative to develop 'annual wildflower strips' in the wider grass verges is very positive; you may also wish to discuss mowing regimes for some of the wider grassed areas, where close mowing may not be the most environmentally appropriate, or attractive, approach. An alternative mowing schedule style could reduce drought-stress and substantially improve biodiversity. Areas including, for example, parts of the grounds of All Saints Church would be well-suited to this, but close local consultation must take place before any change to ensure that people are fully engaged.

Heritage in the village is very evident but opportunities are there for this to be made more of the watercress beds being a good example.

Section C

It was pleasing to meet with important members of the Bloom effort during the tour, but there is scope to make more of this, in particular the involvement of young people. The involvement of the John Harrison School, Hive Pre-school etc should be part of the 2023 tour, or if this is not possible given greater prominence in the portfolio or as part of the pre-tour meeting. As noted in Section A above, Martin's Close should also be included en-route, and this would also bring in another section of the community of Barrow.

A: 31 B:23 C:23 TOTAL: 77



LARGE VILLAGE

Ockbrook in Bloom

Level of Award: SILVER GILT

Judged on 14th July 2022

Judges : Richard Welburn and Jeff Bates

Judges Award: The Royal Oak in supporting Ockbrook in Bloom to develop a sensory garden

Introduction

Judges were welcomed to Ockbrook on a lovely summers day by members of the Ockbrook in Bloom Committee. Following a short verbal / video presentation by the Project Manager, Frank Harrison, judges were conducted on the judging route by members of the Bloom Committee, Chairperson Maureen Overton and Secretary Richard Thompson. The tour concluded with a video summary of the project by Frank and an excellent afternoon tea made and presented by members of the Bloom community.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Judges were taken by car to view the attractive floral beds on Victoria Road. A circular bed depicted the RAF decal. A colourful display of seasonal bedding plants in predominantly red, white and blue had been planted beneath the Welcome to Ockbrook Highway sign and adjacent flagpole creating visual impact.

Wildflower seed mix had been used to good effect on the highway verge outside the Allotment site and had also been used on the access road verge to the Moravian Centre. A large part of the Royal Oak PH garden had been developed by Ockbrook in Bloom as a Sensory Garden and contained a wide selection of plants chosen for their aromatic foliage, leaf texture etc .A considerable number of ex Beer Barrels and a metal bath had been repurposed and were being used to good effect as planters containing primarily bedding begonias. A vivid display of hanging geraniums and pendulous begonias adorned several planted baskets and troughs used as a foil to disguise the side of what would have otherwise been an unattractive metal container. Several brightly planted troughs had been placed on road approach to Redhill Primary School making a nice display together with the display of different coloured textured stars made by the schoolchildren in support of Reach for the Stars initiative.

Section B

Colourful planted flower beds in the vicinity of the Welcome to Ockbrook highway verge signs were a pleasant site when approaching the Village. Of particular note was the circular decal RAF bed planted in service colours. Several wildflower beds had been sown egg Bare Lane and Far Lane Allotments to create a colourful habitat for flora and fauna, with bees and butterflies being visible. Judges were pleased to note that additional areas of seed sowing

are planned. Young people were being encouraged to engage with their natural environment through the Harry the Hedgehog project with hedgehog models located for children to find throughout the Village. Bug Hotels have been created in the Royal Oak PH Sensory Garden complementing the nearby stumpery created to encourage insects etc. Recent improvements to All Saints Church has been used as an opportunity to increase the diversity of planting within the churchyard with border areas adjacent to footpaths being sown with wildflowers and planted with perennials.

Close attention has been given to maintaining a clean environment throughout the Village ,with minimal evidence of litter, graffiti etc. Local volunteers have painted street furniture to improve their visual appearance and provide ongoing maintenance e.g. metal hand rails. Beer barrels have been repurposed as planters and used to particularly good effect in the Royal Oak PH Sensory garden.

Section C

Supported by a new dedicated communications officer several fund raising events in support of the Bloom have taken place during the year e.g. the Bloomers Breakfast, Tombola Stall, Easter Bonnet Parade and Ockbrook Well Dressing. The Village Queens Jubilee created an excellent opportunity for all sectors of the local community through the Scarecrow Festival working together with the Bloom to raise funds and raise the profile of both projects. It was encouraging to note the use of social media in engaging with the local community to promote Bloom values through Facebook and WhatsApp alongside more traditional posters etc. The support provided by the Apple Tree Tea Rooms and Gift shop were noted together with the attractive shop entrance display.

Areas for Development

Section A

Care should be taken regarding plant maintenance when deciding on bed size and selecting plants for bedding displays, for example the RAF bed centre decal was planted with Salvias which would require deadheading. The bed diameter restricted access for this to be easily undertaken. Consider alternatives such as echeveria or alternanthera for example or maybe coloured stones.

Continue to incorporate drought tolerant plants in displays perhaps in greater proportion to traditional bedding. The expansive highway verge on Victoria Avenue lends itself to incorporate a large area of Wildflower Seed mix.

Section B

It was encouraging to note the intention to extend the use of wildflower mixes where appropriate, All Saints Churchyard lends itself to such. Consider producing interpretative display panels to educate the public regarding the use of alternative plants in plantings as to their environmental benefits, flora, fauna, drought tolerant etc

Section C

Wherever possible incorporate the Ockbrook in Bloom logo in publicity material, plant displays, on street furniture etc to raise the projects profile and encourage participation. Consider identifying a local street champion to encourage neighbouring residents to get involved in brightening their immediate environment, local litter picks, hanging basket making etc.

Scores: A: 31 B:24 C:23 Total 78



Large Village

Great Coates in Bloom

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 13th July

Judges: Jeff Bates & Richard Welburn

Judges Award: For the Queens Platinum Jubilee Garden at the Venue in the Village

Introduction

Glorious weather greeted the judges on their first visit to Great Coates, where we were met by Cambridge Park Academy 6th Form students and staff at the Venue in the Village and introduced to tour guides Carl & Dawn before a whistle-stop whizz around to see the many floral features. The tour ended at the Venue, to see in particular the Queens Platinum Jubilee Garden, constructed by the team-members over 4 days at Easter. The visit concluded with light refreshments, courtesy of the WI, and a chance to speak to members of the team. Well done on your tremendous work.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

A barrage of floral colour is evident throughout the village, with many distinctive containers (particularly notable being the pony carts) used at roundabouts, street signs, on railings and other similar locations. All were in full, vibrant bloom. Some of these were established features, but which have improved with experience, whilst others were new. The work at the railway station is a very positive development, as are the beginnings of a small community orchard, the fernery and the planting of 70 trees as part of the Queens Green Canopy. Particular mention must be made of the development of the Queens Platinum Jubilee Garden at the Venue (which was supported by a grant from East Midlands in Bloom as well as other organisations) to create a focal feature, mainly of sustainable perennial planting, in a dark corner of the grounds.

Section B

Pride of place and heritage are well-demonstrated, in particular with the work at St Nicolas Church, where Graham Armitage was a knowledgeable guide to both the history, and his work to make the churchyard grounds become more environmentally-friendly, with the installation of a dead-hedge and appropriate new tree-planting. The grounds are bordered by the ancient moat, another notable – and most unusual – village feature which will hopefully be given greater prominence in the future as the development of adjacent properties progresses. The 'Cow Byre' has been given a mix of sustainable and floral enhancement, to emphasise that in the not-too-distant past this was a very rural community.

Heritage is also poignantly evident with the 'Tommy' sculptures seen, commemorating those who did not return from the major wars of the last century. Herbert Rollett Way, until

recently very overgrown, is now a pleasant green walkway separating the railway line from residential areas. Judges also enjoyed a short walk through a rather-lovely natural meadow. Plants are locally sourced from Carr Lane nurseries, and all the bedding plants are grown peat-free.

Section C

The core team of around 16 people are assisted by volunteers who join in with litter-picks, or care for their nearby areas of planting. Important additional assistance in kind and/or financially comes from the Cambridge Park Academy 6th form students and staff; corporate supporters such as Dalkia WasteEnergy, HSH Coldstores and East Midlands Railway, and NE Lincs DC. This integrated approach has enabled much to be achieved on a surprisingly limited budget for the Great Coates in Bloom project.

As well as the 'main' bloom activity the group was involved in the Halloween weekend, the Queen's Jubilee Beacon Lighting, Remembrance Sunday (which takes place at the re-sited War Memorial on the Nursery School building, the inspiration for Mike and Dawn Stewart to get the whole Bloom project underway) and a Scarecrow weekend.

A genuine treat was to have the nursery school children and staff sing two 'floral' songs for the judges in their garden (which sadly we were not allowed to record in any form).

Areas for Development

Section A

The judges greatly enjoy the floral features of your village but wonder if – particularly in the light of the changing climate – you might consider an alternative approach on some of the more difficult areas to water, moving to sustainable, perennial planting that need not diminish the impact but could reduce the workload for your team and also the negative impact of water use.

Section B

The heritage features in the Village are remarkable and we hope that in the near future you are able to make more of the moat, given that this is so unusual.

There is considerable scope to develop the meadow area (through which we walked) to have an enhanced range of (locally) native wildflowers present, and thus to benefit biodiversity. Guidance from the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust could usefully be gained in this. The tour was very clean in almost all areas, the exception being as we departed the industrial area onto Allington Drive. A final check of the route just before judging might be considered.

Section C

Such a strong section that there is very little to recommend. You might, however, consider that a greater proportion of the tour is done on foot: judges felt that they were getting in and out of vehicles for some very brief visits on occasions, before a short journey to the next stop.

A:34 B:24 C:27 Total: 85



Large Village

Lubenham

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 7th July 2022

Judges: Sharon Sutton, Liz Fairfield, Liz Alun-Jones

Judges award : Eleanor Wale for her work with the In Bloom team and helping extend 'The Beeline' - creating a haven of nectar for pollinators within the village.

Introduction.

This was an excellent entry. The judges were impressed by the enthusiasm of all the volunteers we met. The residents of Lubenham are fortunate to have many areas of open green space, owned and managed by the village. These have been developed with the community in mind offering a variety of seating, a community orchard, a herb garden and the lovely formal garden around the war memorial. In recent years the twenty volunteers of the In Bloom group have planted more perennials, used more drought resistant plants such as sedums and actively encouraged wildlife by planting a variety of pollinator friendly habitats in their 'bee line'.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The village land is owned by the villagers and is managed by committee. The planting throughout the village was generally bright and cheerful and maintained to a high standard both by In Bloom group and by residents. There was some traditional planting such as the lovely red, white and blue display near the village signpost. In recent years there has been a move to more drought tolerant planting such as the sedum and sempervivum display at the old water pump and increasing perennials. There are several areas of wildflower planting to encourage pollinators. Trees in the community orchard looked in good condition. Planting around the village was varied and healthy. The bank of wildflowers adjacent to the village hall is lovely and the seed impregnated bunting is very imaginative!

Section B

Much thought has been given to supporting the natural world. There is a beeline with pollinator friendly planting in the churchyard, a wildflower area at the village hall and the War Memorial. There are many bug hotels and bat boxes. 1,500 trees were planted on the flood plain of the River Welland in 2018 and another 100 planted in Fox Wood last year. Especially noteworthy points were the wildflower meadow and sunflower walk on Westgate Lane, the well maintained allotments with the water storage system using runoff water from the dyke, the Cart Bridge with its pollinator border, the recently opened Fox Wood which will benefit both villagers and wildlife and extend the bee line throughout the village. New railings have been installed at the war memorial which now has a well researched information board produced by the Heritage Group detailing the lives of the local men honoured on the memorial.

The vintage milepost looked splendid after the new coat of paint.

There are some lovely glass poppy panels in the walkway near the War Memorial Garden. You have a policy of saving plants where possible for reuse and volunteers have collected and saved wildflower seeds to expand the 'beeline'.

We were met at All Saint's Parish Church by Margaret, Sarah and John and heard a very good presentation by Margaret explaining the history of the In Bloom group and their current plans. She also explained in some detail the red tape involved in gaining permission to site the planters at the village entrance. The hope is that the end of this process is in sight and you can look forward to seeing them in place soon.

Your excellent portfolio documents planting throughout the year. The group meets during winter to divide snowdrops and plant bulbs. You have a small but steady income from local sponsors and supporters including a probate donation which was used to buy hanging baskets for a shady area in the churchyard and a pedestal planter in the walkway by the War Memorial. Income is also generated from the Lubenham scarecrow festival. Sales of plants and proceeds from upcycling garden tools and bicycles are donated to your Village Church. You have 20 volunteers and a committee of 7. You have also been fortunate in having a young gardener Eleanor to work with you whilst completing her bronze D of E, although she has now completed this she plans to keep working. She was involved in developing the area near the Cart Bridge which is planted with fruit trees and wild flowers. We visited All Saints C of E Primary School and met four of the children involved in growing. They explained with great enthusiasm the highs and lows of gardening and proudly showed us their Green Flag gold award.

Areas for Development

Section A

You are aware of the importance of conserving water and so over time consider adding more perennial planting to your permanent displays. Your communal green spaces managed by In Bloom were a little over mown. You could consider a metre wide strip to encourage wildlife around the hedges without impairing the overall appearance both on the Village Green and in the community orchard.

Section B

A few of the litter bins are old and worn, although recently washed. It would be good to see more water butts in use, or maybe consider a bowser for volunteer waterers using harvested rainwater in future.

Consider the cost effectiveness of buying a bowser for your watering rota. If it were possible to harvest rainwater for some of the watering this would be ideal. You showed us the unusual Cart Bridge. An interpretation board explaining the history would be good. It would be interesting to see the results of the river surveys, either the Welland Trust or your own. You have planted several wild flower meadows and again it would be lovely to know how these have affected wildlife in your area and survey outcomes would help plan future planting. Have you considered doing the RSPB butterfly survey perhaps in conjunction with the primary school?

Section C

It still seems that income from fundraising looks to be largely reliant on personal contact with individuals and small local businesses.

Consider using the village magazine to invite donors to sponsor troughs or planters each year with a credit in print. You could also explore what grants are available locally. The National Lottery Community Fund specialises in small grants for example. You may even be able to recruit a local volunteer to research funding applications.

Your portfolio was very well produced, a little more about autumn colour and your future plans would be helpful in next year's version. Most groups struggle to engage older children and young adult but maybe contacting local guide and scout groups who will have wildlife and conservation and gardening badges or more Duke of Edinburgh students to help with

specific tasks. All of these would ease the burden on the existing volunteers and maybe recruit help for the future!

Scores A:35 B:25 C:25 Total 85



Large Village

Bosworth in Bloom

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 7th July
Alun-Jones

Judge: Sharon Sutton, Liz Fairfield, Liz

Judges Award: For Rev Mark Poskitt and team at St Peter's Church Market Bosworth in recognition of their partnership with In Bloom and the diocese to contribute to their net zero target by providing more wildlife friendly planting in the churchyard.

Introduction

This year's glorious entry was up to the usual high standard and the judges were delighted to see some new features. Market Bosworth is a historic tourist town and the elegant and lavish In Bloom planting makes a major contribution to its attractiveness to visitors. The ambitious new Park Street display draws attention to global warming and work in the churchyard has the very welcome support of the diocese. The new chainsaw sculptures in the country park have become a regular meeting place for friends and families. The planning and coordination involved in achieving this should not be underestimated, this is clearly a well-supported and well-oiled machine.

Areas of Achievement

Section A Horticulture

With over 100 colour themed baskets and tubs, the traditional planting is perfect for the setting and has high impact. Well organised support from the WI and Rotary keeps them healthy and immaculate. The country park with its open spaces and mature trees is well maintained and heavily used by locals and visitors alike. Recent planting in the churchyard wildflower meadow was a little behind the season but looking lovely in the sunshine. The fire station display was beautifully manicured and very eye catching with its fire related colour scheme and models made from recycled materials. In a major exercise last October 30 volunteers planted 2000 daffodil bulbs to create a 'river of gold' re-using some from other beds. These will be monitored, and any gaps filled in subsequent years. Local residents participate in their own spaces, with some striking residential gardens, including Rainbow Cottage, and effective and well-maintained tubs and hanging baskets.

Section B Environment

The village was spotless. Road signs had been washed and undergrowth tidied away, along with the well-maintained historic buildings this gave a real sense of civic pride. The church clock face has been replaced, and the old one has been repainted and used as a feature by the church door.

The scale of the traditional planting makes composting and water reuse difficult, although plants are resold or recycled commercially at the end of the season. To balance this, it is good to see compost toilets and un-mowed areas in the country park and the wildflower meadow being developed in the churchyard, with the support of the clergy, in partnership with the diocese which has a net zero target. Reduced peat compost was used for the bulb planting and a trial of peat free compost will be carried out carefully next season.

Section C Community

The new fun church area behind the church hall is a dramatic transformation and one that brings children into the outdoors for activities they may be more accustomed to doing inside. The engagement with the church and school are to be commended, and it was lovely to see the clergy involved in such a literal hands-on way. The children's planted wheelbarrows for their recent competition were on display at the get together after the judging. This well-established team clearly has excellent relationships around the village with over 60 volunteers and continue to build new ones. Local organisations, neighbours, the library and the country park rangers are also part of the virtual team, and the Facebook page is regularly updated. We met a new young recruit to the dead heading activities and the team have helped the school create a new garden this year which was clearly flourishing thanks to work by staff and pupils alike, and as an unexpected spin off it has become a valuable and imaginative resource for lessons. A regular group of volunteers aged 19 to over 70 meets weekly to work with the rangers on country park maintenance and wildlife surveys to inform future actions in the area. A form in a local newsletter gives simple options for sponsorship in a range of 'prices' and the team continue to explore charitable status.

Areas for Development

Section A

In the country park we saw some dead trees, and tree stakes which were no longer needed but left in situ, it would be good to see this tidied up, or to understand the reason why they are still in place.

Carefully choose where to take the judges, such as the upper area of the Wheatsheaf courtyard, as this detracted from the overall impression.

Section B

The judges weren't shown any of the interpretive panels on the day, nor did they feature in the portfolio, reference to this would tie the In Bloom efforts more tightly to the history of the village.

A picture of the wildflower meadow in the country park, which we didn't have time to see, would draw more attention to the environmental aspects of the entry. The judges will be interested in the results of the peat free compost trial and understand that is a difficult balance between being environmentally friendly and maintaining the high standard of formal displays we have all become used to here.

With this in mind, we would love to see the global warming display in Park Street followed up next year with actions on its messages. More sustainable activities, for example wildlife friendly planting areas, bee corridors, and use of composting and water butts in areas where this is practical, could be tried out in particular areas, maybe in the Wheatsheaf Courtyard or the fire station. There are many buildings around the village centre which could have butts installed and rainwater used to better effect. We would also love to see more in the way of edible growing. This would increase Bosworth's contribution to the environmental part of the RHS objectives.

Section C

The portfolio section on the future had some good aspirations but no firm actions, although we discussed some on the day. The portfolio was very professionally produced but could have been used to better effect. It showed a lot of the same things we saw on the tour, the judges would have liked also to see pictures of the things we were unable to see on the day,

for example, the wildflower meadow in the country park, and the autumn and winter colour to reinforce year-round interest.

Engagement of young people is always a challenge, to build on work to date there may be scope to use scout and guide badges and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award as a catalyst for engagement with the In Bloom team.

Scores A:37 B:25 C:28. Total marks 90



Large Village

Draycott in Bloom

Level of Award: Gold

CATEGORY WINNERS

Judged on 14th July 2022
and Jeff Bates

Judges: Richard Welburn

Judges Award: For the Draycott Street Champions

Introduction

The judges were welcomed to Draycott on a bright and dry summers day by members of the Draycott Village Fund and Draycott in Bloom. The judges were invited to view several information panels illustrating various projects undertaken by DIB during the last year and took the opportunity to talk to several DVF and DIB members together with representatives of a local environmental charity known as The Elephant Room.

It was very apparent from the outset of judging that a key strength of DIB is partnership working with input from all sectors of the local community. Following an informative viewing and discussion Judges were invited to join a conducted tour of the Bloom route accompanied by several DIB and DVF members.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

It was evident throughout the tour that considerable thought had gone into selecting plants that were fit for purpose and appropriate to their chosen location. Both drought tolerant and traditional summer bedding plants had been used to good effect (e.g. Derby Road Prairie Bed) complementing all year round structure planting. It was noted that succulents had been bought at minimal cost from another regional EMiB entrant. Perennial plants were used to good effect as illustrated by the excellent raised beds bordering Millennium Green which are maintained by two DiB members. Almost without exception (being a small floral hanging basket on a Market Square shop frontage) all plants along the route were being maintained to a high standard with grassed borders neatly edged.

Section B

The chosen Bloom theme for this year was The Queens Jubilee and the related colour scheme was purple, and gold reflected in the selection of floral seasonal plants used to good effect in seasonal bedding displays, hanging baskets and raised planters. The same colour choice had been incorporated in Bloom literature, planted fire buckets and street bunting as examples. Residents had fabricated a solar powered illuminated crown framework near the market square underplanted with seasonal bedding which provided an attractive and prominent feature at the squares junction with the main road. Numerous stencilled plant containers and benches depicting the Jubilee were located throughout the route produced by local children and residents. The renovated and planted Wheelbarrow on Derby Road symbolised Draycott's agricultural heritage while the Derby Road Prairie beds were planted

with drought tolerant plants reflecting changing climatic conditions. Water conservation was evidenced by the use of water reservoirs in planters examples being the Derby Road Wheelbarrow and Market Square planters. The Jubilee Map of Draycott in the Market Square is a high quality pictorial plan representation of the Village and is to be commended. Rainwater harvesting was in evidence in the Community Allotment site where rainwater is collected from the roof of the adjacent church to be used primarily on the allotment. Environmental education is promoted within the Bloom with the support of the locally based environmental charity The Elephant Room. Good examples of the charities input were evidenced in the planted borders on South Street with the use of drought resistant plants, mulch dressing and environmentally related art sculptures. Similar use was being made of open spaces at St Chads Water LNR where the Elephant Room had arranged environmental related activities. The Living Wall adjacent to the Methodist Church incorporating vibrantly coloured plants e.g. coleus provided a fitting end to the tour.

Section C

A major strength of this year's entry was the contribution made to the Bloom by all sectors of the community without which the Bloom would be unable to satisfy the judging criteria to the high standards witnessed by the Judges. All participants from individual residents, Street Champions, children, local business, Erewash BC working together under the direction of the Draycott Volunteer Fund and Draycott in Bloom are to be commended for their year round commitment to delivering an excellent entry.

Areas for Development

Section A

Consider using specimen Dot plants where appropriate in seasonal bedding displays to add height and interest, for example Canna, Fuchsia, Castanea, Nicotiana
While the use of adjacent notices to educate public the re Weed Identification is a good initiative, notices should be removed if no weeds are present at the time of judging and replaced with photo evidence in portfolio or similar.

Section B

Consider expanding the use of wildflower seed mixes on highway verges and other areas of low soil fertility to create visual interest and natural habitat opportunities, for example Derby Road highway verges and verges and embankments leading to St Chads Water LNR
Consider introducing differential mowing regime within the Millennium Green, varying the height of mowing, creating corridor walkways and opportunities for flora and fauna rather than having expansive areas of closely mown grass.

Section C

Consider developing a Bloom / Local Heritage App that could be linked to digital QR codes located next to points of local heritage / interest.
Incorporate the DiB log in all community publications, events and on signs, planters etc.
Little evidence witnessed of visibly linking the LNR to DiB on site for example.

Scores: A:38 B:24 C:30 Total 92

URBAN CATEGORY

SPONSORED BY AMBEROL



URBAN COMMUNITY

SCARTHO

SILVER Award

Judged on 15th July 2022

Judges: Irene Bates & Stephen Dando

Judges Award: To the highly motivated Scartho in Bloom team led by Andy Clipson and Lee Robinson

Introduction

The team members of Scartho in Bloom have worked very hard this year to improve and brighten up their local environment. The colourful planters along the roads in the village feature plants grown, planted and maintained by the 'Bloom' team. Under the enthusiastic leadership of Andy Clipson they have become an organised and structured group in almost a blink of an eye. The tour was clean and tidy throughout, and the village displays a welcoming aspect to locals and visitors alike. There was a strong sense of unity and identity which will serve them well in the future.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The recently revived planters along Louth and Waltham Roads had been meticulously planted by the 'Scartho in Bloom' team displaying a wide variety of colourful annuals and perennials that members of the team had taken ownership of. Most plants were grown by members of the team under the horticultural auspices of Lee and Michelle (the green fingered 'go to' guys). Businesses in the shopping area including Butterflies and the Red Sun maintained the lovely planters outside their premises which were well appreciated by the customers. A pleasing sustainable garden maintained by members of the Methodist church was seen. The Scartho Fork roundabout and the central reservation is suitably planted with sustainable perennials, mainly low growing conifers and grasses. Tiered planters outside the

Italian restaurant were evident, as was a cheerful display of sunflowers in individual pots grown by the playgroup at the Community Centre, along with three colourful half barrels. An absolute gem was the Scartho Community Garden maintained exclusively by Barry and Wayne. It was a myriad of wonderfully maintained annuals, perennials, wildlife habitats and educational displays along with humorous recycled artefacts.

Section B

The portfolio explained the ancient history of Scartho dating back at least to Norman times. The notice board outside the Community Centre was in good condition. A number of new wooden seats have been acquired and placed at strategic places to aid 'bench hopping' which is the term used for helping the less mobile rest on their way home from shopping. The judges saw no evidence of weeds, litter or dog fouling on the tour. The 'Bloom' team has regular litter picks and is very environmentally aware. Wildflower meadow planting has been trialled in the field behind the Rose and Crown pub and more wildflower/herb corridors are planned for next year. Bird boxes and bug hotels have been placed in the local parks and a member of the team obtains alpaca poo which helps improve compost for the planters. Rainwater collection was evident at the Methodist Church and at the Scartho Community Garden.

Section C

The Community Facebook page alerts members to local activities and is maintained by Elaine with assistance from her granddaughter. The group have their own logo which has been printed onto stickers and attached to the planters they maintain. An active member of the group engages with the Community Centre and keeps the youngsters at the playgroup involved. The Scartho Community Garden engages with Brownies and other youth groups and Megan, aged 15 has painted an attractive sign which is hung on the wall at Swales Butchers to alert everyone to the location of this garden. The group has so much enthusiasm and there are many plans for next year including more wildflower areas, improving gateway areas to parks, and a project to engage with residents at the large housing development at Scartho Top. Ward Councillor Ron Shepherd has been very supportive with providing wood chippings and obtaining the new benches.

Areas for Development

Section A

Whilst the majority of the planters were in tiptop condition, there were some rather neglected ones by Barnet's barber shop on Waltham Road. The corner open space garden adjoining the Scartho Dental Practice has suffered badly with inappropriate plants being put in a dry sunny location. Suggestions could be drought tolerant, grey leaved plants or yuccas. Whilst Gino has done a tremendous amount of work outside his restaurant, one of the tiered planters looked in need of replanting with fresh plants.

Section B

Continue with your plans to establish wildflower areas in the field behind the Rose and Crown and Quantock Park, and also the gateway areas to the parks.

Try to develop more engagement with youngsters, possibly with the local schools or other groups? Maybe a bulb planting event for everyone to join in? It would be good to see or

hear a little about your local history. One of your Community activities might be a session on how to create compost, harvesting rainwater or other sustainable practices.

Section C

You have produced a lovely portfolio this year but try to keep a pictorial record of any other seasonal planting or events you may do, as photos of spring flowering bulbs or containers would be ideal to show judges what you do at other times of the year. Other events such as fund-raising or litter picking could also be recorded this way. Have you considered fund raising for a water bowser that would greatly assist you with the watering? It is admirable that you already have your own corporate identity, and you are already aware that the stickers get detached easily, so it would be good to see something a little more permanent. Have you thought about producing some posters that could be displayed in the local shops and at the notice board at the Community Centre, to advertise what you are doing and encourage more people to join your group? The Scartho Methodist Church would be an ideal candidate for becoming an Eco Church and it is a free scheme that equips any church to work towards environmentally friendly practices. There are many suggestions here; do not think you need to do everything and certainly not in one go! You have a lot of enthusiasm and determination which should provide rewards in the future.

Section A: 24 Section B: 20 Section C: 17 TOTAL: 61



URBAN COMMUNITY

LITTLEOVER

SILVER GILT AWARD

Judged on 6th July 2022

Liz Fairfield

Judges: Irene Bates and

Judges Award: For: The innovative HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee bed in the village centre

Introduction

Littleover is a multicultural urban community which has grown up around the original village with some historic buildings and a network of old pathways that date back centuries. The judges were met by an energetic In Bloom team who showed us a range of different projects across Littleover representing different parts of the community and different styles of gardening from formal baskets to wetlands and wildflowers.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

In the main Littleover village the planters and baskets, including the splendid displays at Co-op Funeral Care and the Half Moon pub, really brighten a busy urban road scape. The colourful main Jubilee themed display bed is neatly laid out and well maintained, mixing edibles and flowers and with a witty befeater cut out bearing a remarkable resemblance to a local figure. In many parts of the village the team are partly dependent on re sited and donated plants and should be proud of how well they have used what they have been given. For this reason, one or two of the planters looked a little 'thin' but all was well watered and maintained. Hannah Field and Carlisle Avenue community gardens and the Sunnysdale Park wetland areas had high impact and were very appropriate to their setting.

Section B

The community garden at Carlisle Avenue has been running for some years now, as part of a local campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour. During the Covid lockdown, the team painted stones with cheering and informative messages about the pandemic. They have also added a new plaque to commemorate a Derby woman who lived and worked in India, this is nicely consistent with the multicultural nature of the area and is to be commended. Sunnysdale Park is looking glorious as the flood alleviation measures bed into the landscape, ably assisted by Nigel Staunton and his team of volunteers. A heron posed helpfully while we admired the pond from the accessible lottery funded viewing platform. A newly excavated area is being rewilded and the wildflower meadow was very colourful in the July sun. Regular butterfly counts help the group see the effects of their planting and this urban oasis is open to the public at all times.

Hannah Field Community Garden is now in year 4. A forest school was finishing as we arrived, the children running after chickens in the newly planted copse. Angela Griffin has

been involving people with mental health problems or learning difficulties, developing the impressive composting area, polytunnels and veg beds with companion planting, the produce from which is sold in the shop and pop-up café. A number of individuals are now better able to contribute without support. The current funding is coming to an end and Angela is actively seeking new grants to keep going. We wish her and her team every success. The churchyard team have planted a beautiful wildflower meadow and have left part of the churchyard unmown, creating a better habitat for wildlife. A new project this year is the bee corridor on Middleton Avenue. Most houses had a bee sign in the garden and a selection of pollinator friendly plants, clearly the bees had seen the signs. The team reuse as many planters and plants as they can and have rescued large shrubs from a local roundabout to avoid them being thrown away by the council. Water butts are used for the main planting in the village and they re-use compost donated by the police after raids on illegal planting.

Section C

The judges were pleased to see that a suggestion for a front garden competition from a previous year's In Bloom had been taken up. A local business donates vouchers for prizes and the winner is put forward to EMIB, this year's was Rona Wheeler's colourful and immaculate garden on Normanton Lane. During Covid the group has lost contact with some of the schools they used to work with and would like to re-engage here. They still involve cubs in the annual planting of purple crocuses from the Rotary Club for the fight against polio, and also for litter picks. Monthly working parties in Sunnydale Park attract 15-20 volunteers to keep the litter and brambles down and help move the projects forward, and the Carlisle Avenue garden is managed by local people including a little boy who regularly watered his favourite plant and was rewarded with an Easter egg. The in 'Bloom' team make good use of the services of local business to fund and plant their own displays and the WI to water and dead head.

Areas for Development

Section A

Have faith in the plan for leaving part of the churchyard unmown. You could mow paths through the long grass to the 'prayer tree' in the middle of the area, making more of a feature of the tree and partly taming the wildness.

Section B

Extend the splendid bee corridor more widely across Littleover with a target to run right across the area, or to link to main features.

Section C

There are many volunteers involved in Littleover in Bloom but the burden of coordination falls on a small number of shoulders. Is there scope to share the load with younger adults and work towards the next generation of In Bloomers, maybe finding a way for people from other cultures to get engaged as well to reflect the nature of the neighbourhood?

Section A: 29 Section B: 24 Section C: 23 **TOTAL: 76**



URBAN COMMUNITY

EVINGTON in Bloom

GOLD AWARD

Judged on 14th July 2022
Bates

Judges: Stephen Dando & Irene

Judges Award: For the Jubilee bed in the St. Denys Church grounds to Grace Davidson

Introduction

The Judges were greeted by Chris Hossack, Helen Pettman and members of the team and were given a presentation of the projects the group have undertaken during the past year. Chris Hossack, the guide for the tour, introduced the judges to some of the enthusiastic members of the team and highlighted many impressive and imaginative projects. The judges were impressed with the management of the team with a reporter from the Evington Echo who is a member enabling In Bloom publicity to be included in each edition. The route included Main Street, The Common, Evington Park, High Street, St. Denys Church, Piggy's Hollow, Sedgebrook Community Garden, finishing at Evington Village Hall with a buffet lunch.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The numerous planters around the area have a common feature, Cannas grown by Harry Pettman. Many of the other plants have been grown and donated by the In Bloom volunteers. The planting in front of the village hall, necessitated by the City Council's decision to reclaim the full width of the footpath, is colourful. The traditional bedding in Evington Park managed by the City Council complements the Victorian Evington Hall. Sedgebrook Community Garden has recently been designed and planted by the In Bloom team with the support of the City Council. The plants have been carefully selected to provide an ongoing display. The planting covers a range of styles from annual bedding using cultivated annuals, biennials or tender perennials through to native plants.

Maintenance is generally good with both the In Bloom volunteers and the City Council gardening team involved. The hanging baskets at the bowling green are maintained to a particularly high standard and the embankment wild flower project on Main Street is developing well. The combination of seasonal displays and the Jubilee garden in St Denys Church enhance the visitor experience. Where the In Bloom team have been involved in planning; they have chosen plants that are suitable for their locations.

Native planting to attract a range of insects and wildlife is a theme throughout the village. Despite the relatively dry summer, annual bedding is developing albeit slowly in the display beds. Where the plants are in containers or hanging baskets, they have been watered by volunteers and have been able to reach their full potential. The plants are generally free of pests and diseases.

Section B

Scheduled Monument Piggy's Hollow is a substantial earthwork including a former moat and fishponds, the site of a moated manor house that was built in the 13th century. It is currently being managed by the In Bloom team as a meadow with mown footpaths only and it is planned to take a hay crop in the autumn. Plant studies have been undertaken by Leicester University and heritage tours are given by the University staff and Chris Hossack. The village green facilities include a children's play area which is maintained by the In Bloom volunteers. Duke of Edinburgh volunteers are working as litter pickers and the village is clear of litter, graffiti fly posting and there appears to be effective dog fouling control measures. Evington Park have no weed beds adjacent to the bowling green.

The In Bloom team encourage sustainable and ecological gardening practices. Evington Community Nature Reserve project encourages people to devote part of their garden to wildlife. The In Bloom team have distributed 50 packets of wildflower seed, 100 sunflower seedlings and 222 whips of hazel, bird cherry and crab apple. It also has a website at www.littlegreenshoots.uk which provides advice and support to residents.

Section C

The portfolio includes photographs of volunteers at work developing small "local paradises". School gardening at Judgemeadow Community College and Mayflower Primary School with support from the In Bloom schools' coordinator. Spring bulbs featured in the portfolio including the snowdrops in the Burnaby Gardens' Mulberry bed at Evington Park and in the new bed outside the village hall. In June the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was celebrated with a picnic and were entertained with live music on Evington village green organised by the team. The team have plans for a campaign improving the Leicester General Hospital campus, the garden of hope, continuing the development of Sedgebrook Community Garden and the village green. The work of the In Bloom judging was well covered by the press including photographs and interviews.

The team is supported by and works in partnership with a range of community and civic bodies.

Areas for Development

Section A

Whilst the majority of the village annual planting is maintained to a high standard the frequency of weeding of the formal beds in Evington Park needs to be reviewed. The annual bedding plants in the containers are consistently fully grown due to the regular watering. The team may wish to consider how they can improve the water holding capacity of the ground level beds. The Evington village green shrub border is maintained by the team. A review of the plants in the border may now be needed to give a fresh appearance to the area.

Section B

The bee greenway planting by Aldgate Avenue could have interpretation boards to inform the neighbours of the projects aim.

Continue with the projects currently underway and those proposed in the portfolio. The team may wish to consider whether the bus stop shelter could be roofed in sedum or campaign to increase the tree cover in the shopping area to help mitigate the heat effect created by the surrounding hard surface.

Section C

Continue with the work the team were conducting with the schools pre pandemic and the all-year round activities the team have normally organised.

Section A: 31 Section B: 27 Section C: 29 **TOTAL: 87**

COASTAL CATEGORY

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COASTAL CATEGORY

Trusthorpe in Bloom

SILVER

Judged on 12th July 2022
Schofield

Judges: Richard Stephen and Emma

Judges Award: To Phil, leads groundsman, who works for the 'Springs Caravan Park group' for his work in the sustainable, conservation and environmental practices across all sites.

Introduction

Trusthorpe is a small coastal village and it's Bloom group "has pulled together throughout the year" to show many positive aspects including its blue flag beach, floral displays, well-maintained holiday sites and small community gardens at St Peters Church and Annexe. On a sunny day the judges were welcomed by Town Crier David Summers, setting the tone for the tour. The small, dedicated Bloom Team led by Diana have taken the judge's advice from last year's first time entry to 'grow' their ideas and the tour demonstrated this effectively, showing new places of interest, coherent planting schemes and developing community participation.

Areas of achievement

Section A

The tour started at St Peters Annexe Paddock Gardens which demonstrated how Trusthorpe In Bloom have developed individual gardens in the paddock area to include links with the Queens Green Canopy project; new red, white and blue planters were filled with correspondingly colourful seasonal plants. The community garden is used by the church, community and visitors throughout the year. Plant quality and selection in the small gardens in the paddock has improved: each plot is maintained by members of TIB/various church-linked groups. Each plot was themed, and an informative leaflet is available for visitors to use independently. The judges enjoyed visiting Sutton Springs, Trusthorpe Springs and Lakeside Springs Caravan Parks. All three provided colourful floral bedding frontages to welcome their guests. Several resident's attractive front gardens were seen, contributing significantly to the street scene along with the church garden and the newly developed planters in around and on the village hall. The Bus Stop Garden was well maintained by the Bloom volunteers. It was colourful with a Jubilee theme of purple and white, and plants chosen for their tolerance of the local coastal conditions. This is a community space enjoyed by many. 'The mortuary site' boat planter with its sculpted anchor and boat was delightful and again with themed planting. The portfolio provided evidence of all year planting with Spring bulbs around the village.

Section B

The new bird hide in the annexe garden is a welcome addition, providing volunteers and visitors with a focal point to enjoy the wildlife. The new blue composting 'tea' containers will provide feed for the plants and the composting area continues to develop on site. St Peter's Church grounds are well maintained and at the far end of the cemetery the judges could see well-used allotments. The visit to the new fisheries pond was interesting and it was good to hear about their ongoing commitment to nature. The bug hotel at the Annexe continues to provide habitat; several hedgehog piles and homes were seen by the judges during the tour. The village as a whole was well cared for, there were no signs of litter or unkemptness in the commercial, public, or private areas visited during the tour. TIB members constantly keep the gardens weed free (using gardening rotas) and no environmentally unfriendly pesticides or chemicals are used. The lead groundsman for the caravan parks explained that they use compost (own and peat free) in their planters and borders. The street furniture around the village is in good condition, especially noted by the judges at the bus stop garden. The history reference plaque at the bridge near the Bus Stop garden, was seen and is of particular importance to TIB. It was in-fact the location of the last set of wooden sluice gates in Trusthorpe and due to their poor condition they have now been relocated to the Annexe gardens with an information board to tell the community about their importance to the history of the village – a great link to encourage visitors to visit. The judges were impressed with the historic Brick Kiln at Lakeside Spring Caravan Park. At one time Trusthorpe was famous for their local brick production. It was good to hear that the owners are applying for grant funding to conserve it for the future.

Section C

The brochure showed pictures of the work done over the year by TIB within the community. The church's volunteer Bloom woodwork team have been busy creating a variety of seating, planters (trains/ boats) and trellis for planting schemes in and around the village. The art work at 'The mortuary' site (anchor and boat along with the murals on the concrete blocks) added to the tour. It was good to meet Graham Thorpe, an enthusiastic volunteer who grew many of the plants for the Bloom group in his garden. There was evidence of various fund-raising activities throughout the year which the Bloomers had participated in. Local sponsorship was evident with new signs were on planters to highlight their involvement. A range of local groups, often connected to the church, (woodwork group, floral arrangers, gardening, and embroidery) were also recognised in the church for their contributions to the Bloom campaign.

Areas for Development

Section A

Consider developing links with the allotment owners as it would be good to include them in your tour. Include the local businesses planters in the Bloom tour e.g., at the café, as these were noticed by the judges. There are many residents who have developed gardens, run a donation scheme/ drop off point that they can provide a plant / shrub/tree that can be used by the TIB group to enhance that planting in the village and be part of things. Consider reducing the time taken to view all the gardens in the Annexe and use the time gained to take in more residential gardens, a visit to the beach, allotment or locations that might have historical connections.

Section B

Consider further how to show you are a coastal entry with inclusion of the seafront and some (environmentally beneficial) planting on and in the dunes and how TIB can be part of this. Develop links could be developed with local RSPB/ LWT. Continue to develop your relationship with Lakeside Springs with its heritage and developing environmental area. Encourage interpretation boards that explain the heritage of the site. Develop more rainwater harvesting to help with watering around the village, e.g. from downpipes at the village hall or automatic feed troughs at the churchyard. With the new bird hide in mind involve volunteers in some of the national or local biodiversity surveys to see the impact of your work.

Section C

On judging day, introduce the tour with a short presentation. Consider including visits to the local care homes/ public buildings / allotments etc. In your developing portfolio include more narrative e.g., the sponsorship, calendar of activities, open garden winners, brief info on each aspect of the tour stop and any areas off the tour route. A map and itinerary will help you keep focused and to keep within the allocated time; try to include people at certain stops to talk about the site being viewed. Encourage the holiday parks/ cafes to have plaques in a prominent position to show they are “proud to support” TIB. Encourage the press to be aware of your campaign and inform them of the judging date. If they do not attend, then you should take photographs of the judges along the tour so that you can post them on social media.

Section A:25

B:18

C:19

Total 62

SMALL TOWN CATEGORY

SPONSORED BY VERTAS



Small Town

Creswell

Level of Award: Silver

Judged on 13th July 2022

Judges: Sharon Sutton & Malcolm Fisher

Judges Award: For the Cemetery which was immaculately maintained by a dedicated team.

Introduction

Steve Smith and Jeanie gave a warm welcome to the judges on arrival to Creswell on a warm summer afternoon. The judges had the pleasure of seeing all the improvements the team had done over the past few years, the highlights were the Cemetery seating area, the memorial, the Community Allotment, and the sustainable planted displays throughout the village. Well done Creswell, despite the difficulties, another solid entry with minimal resources.

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

The judges were delighted to see some very good perennial and annual floral displays across the tour including the Memorial Garden, Regors flower bed the colourfully planted Pit Truck and the well planted beds at Elmton Road, Laburnum Close and in particular the displays on Mansfield Road which are all maturing nicely to give good impact. The tiered pyramid, baskets and troughs had a good mix of seasonal colourful annuals giving good impact to the street scene, and all these areas were well maintained and in good health.

Section B - Environment

The judges were informed of Creswell's heritage in particular the 1951 Pit Disaster and were shown trees planted in the cemetery 1 for each person who lost their life. Portland Street Allotments is an amazing facility with solar panels, water harvesting, recycled compost from Dales Nursery and homemade fertilizer, this area is the hub of activity and the source of all the plants in the town. The Judges were told about the tree planting which has already started with 15,000 trees and the aim to plant 27,000 trees altogether at the new woodland called Larks Wood.

The street scene was also well kept, good information panels, weeds were under control, there was no evidence of dog fouling or excessive litter, the contact with the local authority had paid off in this instance.

Section C - Community

The group continues to attract financial support from the Lottery, Tesco's bags for life, and from the District Council. Bloom volunteers have been the mainstay for ensuring the street scene is attractive and colourful with local residents and businesses supporting with donations, sponsorships and in-kind time. Facebook is popular with 300 followers, and the portfolio is a good source of before and after photos which is a good record of achievement.

Areas for Development

Section A - Horticulture

The overall quality of the areas looked after by the In Bloom Group are excellent, and the initial contact with the local authority in respect of street cleanliness has also paid off and needs to be continued, consider further development of partnership working between the various private landowners/business along the street scene as some areas were weedy. For next year's tour try to ensure that the judges visit a school if they have been involved in some way, the judges were told that the school did show an interest in being involved, could this be developed with an alternative approach? You also made progress at the station it would be good to see this project completed for next year's judging, and the development of the Medical Centre will be a leap forward in improving the derelict area at the rear of the war memorial.

Section B - Environment

Consider developing a trail pointing out the important areas relating to Creswell's heritage such as the Model Village, pits and natural heritage. Consider developing specific wildflower / natural habitat areas (grass verges, adjacent walls/fences, parts of the unused allotment), or a visit to the woodland areas you mentioned. Consider talking to the Wildlife Trust or other natural habitat group to find out what flora and fauna are in the area so that work you do to enhance biodiversity is appropriate, they often have schemes offering free wildflower seed packets, maybe a wildflower front garden project could encourage residents to take part in improving the environment for biodiversity?

Section C - Community

You mentioned the volunteers being a small group, however as we walked around the tour and looked at the portfolio there are clearly more people involved, could this anecdotal interest in what you are doing be expanded to include more people? Even if people only come for one day it is better than no interest at all. Continue to work with local businesses to support your in bloom efforts, even if all they do is keep their own areas weed free and tidy. The Black Diamond pub has shown an interest in what you are doing, could this be expanded? The judges enjoyed reading your portfolio and there were really good photos of before and after, could you include examples of the three sections and use the time allocated to you fully to show us all aspects of the criteria? This would help us award you all the marks you clearly deserve.

Scores: A:31 B: 15 C: 15 Total Score: 61



SMALL TOWN

Brigg

Level of Award: Silver

Judged on 6th July 2022

Judge: Sharon Sutton & Malcolm Fisher

Judges award: For the welcoming entrance to the St John's Church.

Introduction

The town of Brigg sits nicely in the landscape on a gravel spur of the Lincolnshire Wolds that juts out into the valley of the Ancholme River. The judges were met in the Market Square of this historic market town by Sharon Riggall, The Bloom is supported by the local Town Council, North Lincolnshire Council and the local Bloom group. The tour of the town showed a good mix of Council, business and local community involvement with highlights being the Church, allotments and Demeter House Sensory Garden.

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

The overall impact and standard of the horticultural displays and amenity areas, including highway verges, was good. Tiered planters were planted with good quality plant material with lavenders and roses in the mix which are drought tolerant. Barrier planters were used to good effect on the River Bridge and Allerton Way roundabout, and front gardens and businesses were also a good standard.

Community gardening was also encouraging to see at St John's Church which was particularly colourful, a lovely welcome into what could have been a dull area, and the good start made by students at the Demeter House Sensory Garden will be worth a visit in the years to come as it matures, the Allotments were in good use for growing the in bloom plants as well as the full long border display used for both a lovely visual impact and as a holding space for replacement plants.

Section B - Environment

It was encouraging to note the trial of comfrey and nettle-based liquid manure is in use, as was the policy to use peat free compost and compost as much of the waste as possible on the Allotment, there were also recycling bins in the town centre, the areas seen were clean and tidy especially the town centre. Furniture was in good condition, and it was evident that the community respected where they live. There was no evidence of excessive weed control or dog fouling.

Section C - Community

It was encouraging to note that displays were maintained throughout the year with the majority of plant material being grown in a glasshouse and poly tunnel on the allotment plot, Jason is a definite asset to this area. The Bloom is well supported by Town and District Councils who funded the self-watering baskets, Rotary Club bulb planting, Business Partnership keeping the town centre clean and supporting the hanging baskets, Litter Busters, WI maintaining beds, Rainbows making Jubilee crowns and Demeter House School Sensory Garden, the Nelson pub with their lovely beer garden and the Boat club looking after the river, I'm sure there are many more.

Promoting the Bloom takes place via community events, while the Bloom has a Facebook page which has attracted interest.

Areas for Development

Section A - Horticulture

While a reasonable number of floral hanging baskets and barrier baskets were evident in the town centre, the main floor planters were a bit sparse, so impact was a little lacking, the lavenders at the monument garden were struggling to survive no doubt from the dry conditions experienced lately, ensure permanent planting is done as early in the season as possible, ideally in the winter months.

Section B – Environment

Consider highlighting any publicly available interpretation about the history of the town, do you have any art features that make your town unique? There was some evidence of graffiti near the Lord Nelson Pub.

Do you have an area where biodiversity could be showcased, such as a wildflower meadow or wild areas, are there any surveys available for the river corridor for instance, how are these areas being managed for the benefit of wildlife? Are there bat or bird making events and activities in the local area on event days?

We look forward to visiting the Millennium Green project once completed as this may be the perfect area to show off your natural environment.

Section C – Community

Consider using your portfolio as a means to log progress, before and after photos for instance, all year round activity, but also to show areas not seen by the judges, so that we can allocated as many marks as possible, consider showing a forward plan which may be useful for funders and shows ongoing commitment of the group and partners. Consider extending the contact with young people, maybe involving them in the tour, do any school have a school garden for instance, or are any youth groups involved in environmental initiatives, particular students involved with Duke of Edinburgh Awards as an example that could be highlighted in the portfolio or on the route.

Well done Brigg, a lovely town, we'll look forward to visiting next year to see how the Millennium Green project is coming along

Scores A:25 B:20 C:19 Total: 64



SMALL TOWN

Kirton in Lindsey

Award Silver

Judged on 6th July 2022

Judge: Sharon Sutton & Malcolm Fisher

Judges award: To Martin Hollingsworth for his knowledge, enthusiasm and understanding of the history and heritage.

Introduction

The judges were welcomed by Kirton in Lindsey in Bloom representatives, Dr Pat Frankish and Martin Hollingsworth. The tour started at the Library Car Park and made its way through this lovely historic town located on Lincoln cliff, the town has a medieval market square at the top which is a focal point with shops and cafe, and the Anglo Saxon St Andrew's church nestles in the lower half of the town with historic features and points of interest throughout, a lovely town with a strong community feel.

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

The standard of floral displays and grounds maintenance was good throughout the judging route. Plant material is sourced from a local plant nursery and beds have the addition of perennials to give a varied floral displays. New trees have been planted in the housing estates provided by the Woodland Trust to improve local attractiveness. The well-maintained War Memorial Garden is an attractive roadside feature, and several colourful tiered planters and lamppost planters help to brighten the Market Place.

Several attractive flower beds were visible on the route including outside the Doctors Surgery, Station Road and at the front of the Cemetery which offer a variety of seasonal bedding, perennial plants, and mature shrubs, there were also some excellent front gardens which are worthy of entering the EMiB Floral Awards.

Section B - Environment

A landscape feature of local heritage significance known as Chirchetone, located on Traingate, incorporates an original potato plough being held by a metal sculpture of a farmworker indicated the towns important agricultural history, the attractive and well maintained perimeter railings and metal bench seats around the war memorial facing the attractive Green were very nice highlighting the poppy.

A large expanse of grass known as The Green is being maintained to a good standard. No litter or graffiti was visible on the judging route with hard paved areas and footpaths being maintained to a good standard with the help of the alleyway being kept clean and tidy by the Brownies.

Section C – Community

There are many plans for the future development of key areas, with funding secured and local community support the next few years will see changes and improvement which will be of great benefit. Huntcliffe School sensory garden plans and early development of the project are all very promising, the support of sponsors and in-kind time and materials was impressive along with the enthusiasm of Tracey, Preston, Poppy and Jake, judges will look forward to visiting this garden in the future once completed. All year events and activities have been impacted by Covid but there are still events going on with litter picks, tree planting garden competitions 'pint sized peas' and planting the new rose beds. The Duke of Edinburgh initiative has helped with painting the chain railings on the Green which looked nice and smart.

Areas for Development

Section A – Horticulture

While the overall grounds maintenance of the Cemetery is very good, the appearance would be helped if the Commonwealth War Graves Commission could be encouraged to synchronise maintenance to avoid different standards being evident.

Some of the new planting throughout the tour had been affected by the very dry Spring with dead or failing plants evident in key areas such as the rose beds and Station Road, it is understood that replacement planting is planned for the Autumn.

Some of the tree planting was also struggling with evidence of some dead trees.

Section B – Environment

Wildflower planting where appropriate would potentially reduce maintenance costs while being an attractive change to traditionally mowed grassed areas, this could be considered on the cemetery boundary, and maybe in areas of the Green and maybe banked areas.

Some street furniture needed maintenance, such as in the Market Square, benches could do with a paint and the tourist information board was tired and damaged, some bins on route needed cleaning and the Library railings could also do with painting.

There are further opportunities to enhance the story of Kirton in Lindsey with interpretation, maybe QR codes could be used to narrate Martins extensive knowledge of the area to create a future self-led history trail?

Section C – Community

Consider promoting the Bloom in planting and landscape initiatives by way of signage, logo, press releases etc, try and show out of season and areas the judges couldn't see on the day in the portfolio to help us give as many marks as we can, a list of events and activities throughout the year, more Spring and winter photos for example is an easy fix for this.

Could you engage the Duke of Edinburgh group to paint the furniture and Library railings as part of the awards?

Well Done Kirton In Lindsey this is a really good entry, and we look forward to seeing the school sensory garden next year.

Section A – 24 Section B – 18 Section C – 24 Total: 66



SMALL TOWN

Heckington

Level of Award: SILVER

Judged on 8th July 2022

Judges: Stephen Dando & Marian McClelland

Judges Award: To Harriet Giles-Bone for her work in improving and interpreting the biodiversity of a sports ground border

Introduction

The judges were met at Heckington Pavilion and Sports Ground by Dawn Phillips and members of the In Bloom group. In place of a portfolio the team had created in the car park a wall of photographs, artifacts, text, and graphics illustrating the work of the group prior to the visit. This was an imaginative way of communicating with the judges. The tour included the wild flower border at Ruby's Plaice, the War Memorial and village green, a mini managed woodland and seed swap box, Oatfield Way wildlife meadow, the arboretum for the fallen, the gravel garden at The Royal Oak, the horticultural work undertaken by the Station Adopters at Heckington Rail Station and concluded with light refreshments at the Windmill gardens.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The In Bloom team has carefully placed planters at key locations around the village. The summer bedding is of a good condition healthy and colourful. The Millers House garden is being restored to its 1920's grandeur by the Heckington Windmill Trust using photographs taken by the family when it was the home of the miller. Where possible the plants used are those shown in the photographs. Planted areas are all maintained to an appropriate standard with volunteers weeding, feeding, and watering. Heckington in Bloom focuses on both conventional amenity planting and native planting both of which are carefully planned and implemented. The choice of species in dry bed to the front of the Royal Oak is appropriate.

Section B

Heckington eight sailed windmill dominates the village, and its significance is interpreted in the visitor centre. At the village green the In Bloom team has restored the village crest sign. A group of furniture has been commissioned by the In Bloom team and installed adjacent to the village green. Constructed of metal to a unique design they enhance the street scene. The In Bloom group has repainted many of the benches in the village and the street name signs have been washed, repainted and re-riveted. Each of the village entry signs have been enhanced with planters. The In Bloom group recycle plants, grow plants from seed whenever possible and use comfrey as fertiliser and do not use artificial pesticides. Their motto can be summarised in a poster they displayed "If something is not eating your plants, then your garden is not part of the ecosystem" Harriet Giles-Bone described her work

improving the biodiversity of the sports ground border. She has created a children's activity booklet, installed bat boxes, beetle boxes and improved the habitats for bees. Julia and Tim Grigg are serious rubbish collectors focusing on large items that have been fly tipped and recycle 85% of the collected rubbish. Recycling is fundamental to the group including the use of ferret boxes to protect wild orchids and operation of a seed exchange box. Paul and Nicolas Kirkman, two of the mobility scooter litter pickers regularly travel on pre designated routes around the village. Oatfield Way 5 acre meadow has been sown with a bee and beetle mix, mown in the autumn with the findings left to compost down and enrich the soil. Whilst the results of a botanical survey have not been published yet, anecdotal evidence suggests beetles and other insects have adopted the area and toads, newts, hedgehogs, buzzards, barn, and tawny owls are regularly seen.

Section C

As the decision to enter the In Bloom competition was taken in the spring of 2022, there is only limited evidence of year-round activities. However, there is anecdotal evidence of prior activities: the cub scouts are encouraged to take a bottle of water home after school and drink half and water a tree with the other half. Trees for Heckington have a "Tree Champion" for every tree in the arboretum and operates a closed Facebook page with over 100 members. The group plan to improve the governance by forming a committee, obtain charitable status and work with St Andrews Primary School. There are 43 volunteers in the group. The In Bloom Facebook enables volunteers and residents to be kept up to date with news and requests for help. This is complemented by a leaflet describing the work of the In Bloom team circulating in the village. Businesses and organisations supporting the team including Heckington Pavilion & Playing Fields, the Royal Oak, Heckington Community Radio, the Windmill Shop, Heckington Gardening Club, Trees for Heckington, Heckington Windmill, the Poacher Line station adopter, Heckington Parish Council and North Kesteven District Council. Shops, businesses, and individual homes are encouraged to show their support for the In Bloom by displaying a bee logo in a prominent window.

Areas for Development

Section A

Continue to develop the areas throughout the village. Review how you grow plants to minimise the losses the group experienced this year. The group may decide to continue to purchase bedding plants rather than grow from seed. If the group decide to display hanging baskets, they need to consider the funding, planting, and watering of them.

Section B

Consider contacting the Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology to explore how the heritage of the village could be interpreted via interpretation boards.

Section C

Continue to develop the various publicity channels (Facebook, leaflet, Bee logo, local newspapers, WhatsApp etc) Concentrate on creating a viable committee and seeking charitable status. Enhance the partnerships with the parish and district council and other local organisations.

Judges do like to meet children involved in the In Bloom and if the proposed links with the junior school come to fruition their efforts could be included in the tour.

The group needs to focus on generating a sustainable income stream.

Scores A:28 B:24 C:16 Total



CATEGORY Small Town

Welton

Award – Silver

Judged on 13th July 2022

Judges: Sharon Sutton & Malcolm Fisher

Judges Award: To the Parish Council and local volunteer team for the research and development of the Welton Heritage Trail.

Introduction

The judges were given a warm and hospitable welcome on arrival by Louise and Julia. This was the first time Welton had entered East Midlands in bloom since 2019 when they were awarded a Silver Award. The parish council had led the formation of a new team including local volunteers, scouts and guides and the Welton Litter pickers. Note had been taken of areas for improvement at the 2019 assessment and there was particular pride in the establishment of the local Heritage Trail. The judges were taken on an interesting and comprehensive tour of Welton, and it was good to see all the examples of the local initiative of Wacky Planters in which considerable creativity and individuality was on show. Many thanks Welton for your hospitality both on arrival and at a convivial lunch.

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

A colour scheme of red, white and blue had been chosen for the formal horticultural displays to reflect the Platinum Jubilee year. These were located around Welton, but special mention should go to the Black Bull and surrounding area where the displays were particularly effective and well maintained. There is some seasonal planting with spring flowering bulbs planted at the village entrances. The Wacky Planter initiative was a great success with several really excellent examples around Welton. We were shown planters utilising lawn mower boxes, televisions and shopping trolleys amongst many other diverse items. A community orchard had been planted which when mature will be a wonderful resource for residents to enjoy as well as local wildlife.

Section B - Environment

Work continues to maintain and improve the area around the Beck. Native plants have been sourced and planted around the banks and a cleaning programme has removed rubbish and tree pruning. A volunteer group, The Welton Litter pickers continue to be active with a monthly litter pick. The town certainly benefits from this as it looks very clean and tidy throughout. A printer cartridge recycling scheme has been started by the Parish council. Early days yet but a good initiative. Work is in progress to enhance the lagoon area. Funds have been made available by Lincolnshire County Council to purchase bird boxes wildflowers and grass seed. An insect hotel (named 'Btingham Palace') is in preparation with the aim of involving local children in the project. Welton has over the last few years had a problem with chafer beetles, this seems to have reduced recently though some previously affected gardens have been redesigned avoiding grass. A good degree of

skill, variety and individuality has been displayed in finding alternative solutions. The introduction of a local Heritage Trail is a great innovation. Information on 11 different sites is accessed by scanning a QR code to hear a short description given by local residents.

Section C - Community

There are currently only 7 small allotments in Welton. There are plans to increase this to thirty when new land is developed. A 22 acre plot, part of a large housing development will be transferred, and this should enable a range of community led initiatives to be progressed. The group has done extensive consultations and ensured that the local residents have been kept informed on progress, thus ensuring that the community uses these areas, and a strong sense of belonging is generated. Manor park is a well maintained local community sports and recreational area, it is also a hub for the library and groups meetings and events. A huge amount of impressive work has been done by a group of dedicated volunteers to research the Heritage Trail. This has unearthed human stories and links to the area which are excellently narrated online.

Areas for Development

Section A - Horticulture

There is an opportunity to increase the number of formal planters and displays in Welton, what are in place are generally good but there is always room for more and better. The community orchard will need some extra care to bring it to fruition as some trees appeared distressed with the dry conditions Consider ways in which more perennials can be used thus encouraging a greater diversity of plant style and form. This will improve the support for a greater range of insect life. Continue to involve local gardeners in future initiatives to build on the Wacky Planter project

Section B - Environment

Continue with the lagoon initiatives. This area has great opportunities for development. More colourful native planting would be good. Can the local wildlife trust make suggestions on suitable varieties to try? The community orchard is a great idea. The existing planting will need some committed management until properly established. Perhaps similar initiatives could be considered for the new 22 acre site. An extension of the 'Btingham Palace' project to encourage biodiversity would be beneficial as would the greater involvement of local children. As a longer term development could you suggest to your local bedding supplier that they do some trials on one or more of the newer peat free composts to see if it is possible to move further in this direction. Can some plants be supplied by local gardeners to help with costs? The larger number of allotments may encourage more practical help in this area. Further work is needed and ongoing on the Heritage Trail project to make it more accessible to all including non-smart phone users.

Section C – Community

Continue to include more local groups in the in Bloom project
Look for ways to include more participation and sponsorship from local businesses
Consider opportunities for extra related community events such as garden competitions and horticultural shows. The increase in the number of allotments would possibly help with the latter. Continue to develop the Heritage trail and increase inclusiveness and accessibility. Well done Welton, we're looking forward to visiting you in the future to see all these wonderful plans come together.

Scores: A:28 B:22 C:21 Total Score: 71



SMALL TOWN

Long Sutton

Level of Award: SILVER

Judged on 4th July 2022

Judges: Stephen Dando & Marian McClelland

Judges Award: For the establishment and management of Cowpers Gate.

Introduction

The judges were welcomed by Kay Jenkinson the chair of Long Sutton in Bloom and Barry Meade at the Royal British Legion Hall. Following an introduction to the various groups involved in the In Bloom including the Long Sutton Wombles (litter pickers) We were taken on a tour of the town starting with the planters adjacent to the public toilets looked after by Marian Rowlands. The excellent planters produced by Long Sutton Men's Shed were seen regularly throughout the tour. The judges were shown the community gardens Annie's Patch and Cowper's Gate and were introduced to Chrissie Wix one of the developers and long-time supporters of Cooper's Gate. The tour continued with visits to locations demonstrating the In Bloom's key achievements including the magnificent hanging baskets and planters in the Market Place and High Street. A comprehensive portfolio detailing the support given by the local councils, businesses and volunteers complemented the tour.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The planting colour scheme is coordinated throughout the town, whether it is the hanging baskets and planters in the Market Place, High Street or in the permanent beds around the town. The Gedney triangle is planted as a dry garden for all year round interest complemented with spring bulbs. It is a dry exposed site ornamental grasses have been used due to their ability to survive dry conditions and shallow substrate. Heathers provide a flash of colour. St. Mary the Virgin Church grounds are planted with spring bulbs which flower at the same time as the church flower festival which is appreciated by the many visitors to the festival. Roses and Hydrangeas in full bloom enhance the footpaths leading to the church providing a delightful background to wedding photographs. Long Sutton Library is the site for the royal crown celebrating the Queen's platinum jubilee, with a purple planting theme created by In Bloom member Barry Meade with help from Long Sutton Men's Shed. Outside S & S Butchers a recycled trade bicycle has been planted with colourful bedding which creates an attractive feature at the corner of Market Place and High Street. Following advice from last year's judge, the dry border adjacent to the Co-operative store has been replanted with shade loving plants and is cared for by Marian Rowlands. Maintenance of the containers and baskets in the Market Place, High Street, Cooperative car park and around the town is to a high standard with watering undertaken daily by the In Blooms employee Barry using the "Watering Van". Deadheading and weeding is the responsibility of the In Bloom volunteers

Section B

The rural heritage of the town is interpreted by a newly installed potato scales installed at the rear of the Co-operative store, the potato sacks are planted with summer bedding. The History Society have installed information boards which tell the story of Long Sutton in the Civic Hall, and the Civic Society has erected an Long Sutton Trail information board in the Market Place. Long Sutton town water pump is maintained to a high standard and in non-jubilee years a floral display and interpretation board marks the legend of King John's jewels is constructed to the front of the library. Street furniture is well kept and there is a general absence of litter. The Shrubberies is an old pasture and parkland managed by Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and other 40 species of birds and 12 species of butterflies have been recorded. There is evidence of nature being considered in other areas for example in Annie's Patch has a recycling area with a resident hedgehog family. To ensure a constant water supply the In bloom group has installed a water harvesting system on a large roof in town to collect rain water in large tanks.

Section C

The portfolio evidences year round activities including involving members of the community to tidy and restore planted areas. Regular meetings are held with representatives of the Parish Council, Civic Society and other interested parties. A "garden walk" is held in June each year which is fund raising through plant sales. A twice yearly newsletter, promotional brochure and Face Book group Spotted Long Sutton is used to promote the In Bloom group. Unfortunately the existing In Bloom Face Book page is no longer being updated. The In Bloom group were actively involved with the Rainbow Nursery, Long Sutton Primary School and Peele Community College. The 25 members of established group has reached out to the wider community and has the support of approximately 60 town traders, Long Sutton Men's Shed and other members of the community. The group has a sustainable income flow which will enable it to continue to develop.

Areas for Development

Section A

Whilst the planting in the town centre is maintained to a high standard, some of the areas such as Annie's Patch and Cowper's Gate show evidence of a lack of maintenance with weeds in paved areas and plants that require pruning. There is a concern about the continuing maintenance of Cowper's Place and a new funding source should be considered. The revamping of Annie's Patch needs to be undertaken as it has become overgrown.

Section B

There was only a small amount of litter and at Winfrey Park there is evidence of graffiti. Weeds alongside roads and between pavements could be removed. The planters in front of the toilets could be repainted. The Bull Inn continues to be a challenge to the town, although the civic society has made an attempt to improve the building.

Section C

The In Bloom group should continue to attempt to find someone to relaunch the Face Book page. It would be good if the judges could meet representatives from the local schools and the parish council. **Total A:30 B:23 C:21 Total 74**



Small Town

UPPINGHAM in Bloom

Level of Award GOLD

Judged on 11th July 2022

Judge: Stephen Dando and Marian McClelland

Judges Award: For the disseminated Orchard

Introduction

The judges were welcomed at Uppingham Cricket Ground by Uppingham in Bloom chair, Pam Dalby, who made initial introductions and then took us on a guided tour accompanied by Keith Dunne, the Deputy Head Gardener of Uppingham School. The School is a key feature and one of the oldest buildings in the town. Many new buildings have been built around the town to accommodate the school's growing population and contributes hugely to its thriving community. All the schoolhouses and buildings have extensive gardens, which give the town a well-kept appearance. There is a cohesive look to the floral displays as Uppingham School Gardening team source the in Bloom Team plants from their local garden nursery, Welland Vale. Uppingham is an old rural market town and its square has become the venue for events such as feast day, fat stock show, Christmas in Uppingham and a weekly market. The display of metal animals on the A47 roundabout was designed to mark the existence of the only remaining animal market held in temporary pens in a rural market town. A heritage trail is evident around the town.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Uppingham in Bloom plant for all year interest and the overall appearance is aesthetically pleasing, and in combination with the Uppingham School planting, creates a lasting impression of a very picturesque rural town. All planting appeared to be colour theme co-ordinated, well maintained and weed free. Grasses and hedges were trimmed and neat. As part of the Queen's Canopy campaign, Uppingham in Bloom and the Town Council have joint funded and planted 8 new trees on Tods Piece. A tree planting plaque was made by the British Legion's veterans to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee and these trees will be added to the existing Tree Trail. There are plans to raise a further £2000 to add more trees to the project. There is a five-year plan to overhaul and develop the Sensory Garden on Tod's Piece by adding structural art and more planting. An important part in this development is the engagement of the young people that use the park. By involving them in the plan it is hoped to discourage graffiti and develop a sense of pride and respect for the environment. The residents of Tod's Terrace have taken on the responsibility for this as well as ensuring the whole of their terrace is cultivated and maintained with pots, planters and a raised bed.

Also, in support of the Queen's Jubilee, Uppingham in Bloom have donated to a newly developed area called The Elms, two Battlefield Oaks. These are maintained by the Residents Association. A disseminated orchard has been planted on two grassland areas on

Beast Hill and Hogs Hill funded by Uppingham Town council, with advice from Doug Stacey. Trees include apple, strawberry, quince, black walnut and medlar. The idea was that the local residents would help themselves to the fruit. The box topiary "Uppingham" on the Ayston Road is thriving under the care of Ken Hitchen. This and the nearby beds, which contain some fine examples of permanent shrubs, are sponsored by local businesses, and planted and maintained by Uppingham in Bloom. Strips along the roadsides have been planted in bulbs and then left unmown to encourage wildlife. The Falcon Hotel has a lovely, tranquil garden at the rear, which is tended by Geoff Lambert, that displays huge geraniums that have been in the garden for the past 3 years. There are several Annabel Hydrangeas and a magnificent Gingko Biloba tree. The planting is basically pink and white which creates calm seating area.

Section B

Uppingham's local heritage is obvious throughout the town and is acknowledged by the community through the heritage trail, mosaics/metal art works and festivities. 90% of Uppingham in Bloom's green waste goes to the Uppingham School for composting which is then in turn used by the school and offered to other voluntary groups as free compost. Uppingham in Bloom advertise when they are changing the flower beds and planters and invite people to come along with a bag to collect bulbs and plants for a donation. Uppingham School have poly tunnels where plants can be stored.

Section C

Uppingham in Bloom have a diary of fund-raising events such as Winter warmer, Open gardens, Barn Dance, Bloom Ball, Sponsored walk. They also have plans to increase the Tree trial, improve the Sensory Garden and add metal sculptures to the roadside near the A47 roundabout. The community allotment was gifted by Uppingham Town Council. Uppingham in Bloom have turned it into a quiet haven for people to sit and to collect produce. This year, to celebrate the Jubilee, all things purple have been planted, mange tout, broccoli, kale, carrots, French beans, spring onions. Allotment neighbour, Uppingham Grows, provides gardening opportunities for lonely and vulnerable members of the community. Rick Ellis continues to share produce on the Uppingham in Bloom swap table. Two Duke of Edinburgh volunteers are weeding, helping with events and have become valued members of the in Bloom Team. Uppingham in Bloom information and upcoming events is distributed via Twitter, Facebook and www.uppinghaminbloom.co.uk. The Rutland Times, Stamford and Rutland Mercury and The Village Diary publish Uppingham In Bloom events and photographs.

Areas for Development

Section A To develop more permanent planting that attracts insects and wildlife

Section B To develop appropriate habitats to support wildlife and to assess the impact of that intervention.

Section C To continue to develop relationships with the young people who use Tod's Piece, encourage them to participate and take on some responsibilities.

Scores A:35 B:25 C:28 Total 88



SMALL TOWN

QUORN

Level of Award: GOLD

Judged on 7th July 2022

Judges: Marian McClelland and Stephen Dando

Judges Award: For Best Redevelopment of a Wildlife friendly, Peaceful, Social Area for Church View Garden.

Introduction

The village of Quorn has recently expanded significantly. The village derives most of its income from the hospitality sectors and has many pubs, cafes and restaurants in the centre. The judges were met at the Baptist Chapel by Jane Hollingworth the co-ordinator, chair, driving force behind the Quorn in Bloom Team and our guide for the tour of the village. Quorn in Bloom have a service level agreement with the Parish Council for the maintenance of the Memorial Garden, Church View Garden, the Spinney Drive Planter and the Loughborough Entrance bed. Other areas developed and maintained in the village by Quorn In Bloom and are financed through fund raising activities. They are also supported by Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council, Tarmac and Quorn Townlands Charity. There are nine members of Quorn in Bloom Team but a variety of participating voluntary groups contribute to make Quorn an aesthetically attractive village that supports and extensive range of plants and wildlife in an eco-friendly and sustainable way.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The diversity of planting reflected the environmental conditions and have been created to attract a variety of wild life. There is evidence that sustainability is paramount. Permanent trees, shrubs, perennial planting and naturalised bulbs have been used extensively with the addition of only a small amount of bedding plants to inject colour and interest. Some drought tolerant planting also evident. Design, compatibility and succession planting have been co-ordinated to create yearlong visual impact. There is a naturalistic design to Church View Garden where shrubs, wildflowers, bulbs and small meadows have been planted to create a fusion of style that aims to increase biodiversity. Seating has also been designed to give a naturalistic feel and encourages families and friends to stop, sit and interact. Lots of people use the walk ways through Church View garden to access other areas of the village. Colour theme for the village is red, white and blue. There is a small crown installation in the Memorial Garden where the colour theme is red, purple and platinum in celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Standards of cultivation, maintenance appeared to be excellent throughout and no signs of disease or pests were evident.

Section B

Dotted around the village were several notice boards that gave information regarding a number of activities taking place and how to get involved with different groups. These and the street and park furniture were clean and well maintained. The village looked graffiti and litter free; the volunteer litter pickers Quorn Litter Wombles have made a big difference. There are several sculptures in Church View Garden and in Stafford Orchard Park which were made by students from Loughborough College of Art from the millstone grit which formed the base of Wrights Elastic Webbing Factory chimney. This was a famous landmark until it was dismantled in late 1990s. Bricks from the base were used to build the planters at Quorn Cross. There are several areas that have been identified for development and or maintenance to promote rich biodiversity. Tom Long's Meadow supported by the Leicestershire and Rutland Wild Life Trust is a wet woodland swamp and meadow land. Volunteers and Borough council Rangers manage willow and hazel coppicing on the banks of Springfield Lake. An open grass area called The Slabs is owned by the parish council. In Bloom Team are in negotiations to make it more species rich by creating a wildflower meadow. Representatives from Quorn in Bloom, St Bartholomew's Church Council, Property Group and Charnwood Borough Council and Idverde UK have agreed that a small area in the churchyard can be allowed to grow as a meadow. Several areas of greening solutions were evident; for example, shrubs and trees had been planted in both Church View Garden and Stafford Orchard Park to create screens from unsightly walls/buildings. Leaves, pine cones, beech cupules and pine needles are collected and used as mulches. No pesticides are used. Water is often extracted from the brook for watering village bedding

Section C

Quorn in Bloom has a range of groups from the community that are involved in contributing and supporting current and future projects. There are volunteers of all ages that take some responsibility for their residential area, from litter pickers to planting roadside areas, from building nesting pontoons to planting beds at the Great Central Railway Station. Rawlings Academy Forest School use their area to help children who struggle with conventional teaching methods to grow vegetables and learn bush craft. Volunteers encourage the older people of Quorn at Lonsdale Mews to participate the Green Fingers Gardening Club. Holloway House garden volunteers look after the planting at the house for the residents; some of the residents help with the gardening. There are various fund-raising activities such as Open Gardens and Gardening Club. But as much of the planting is sustainable, plants are being split and replanted not replaced funding does not appear to be an issue. Facebook page and Quorn in Bloom WordPress are kept up to date for information and as a diary.

Areas for Development

Section A To continue to develop plans and secure funding for the proposed meadow area at St Bartholomew's Church Yard.

Section B To create a species rich meadow on the area called The Slabbs

Section C To involve the businesses in centre of the village to participate in Quorn in Bloom. To grow core Quorn in Bloom Team. More school participation

Scores A:38 B:28 C:26 total: 92

TOWN CATEGORY

SPONSORED BY VERTAS



TOWN

DARLEY DALE

Award : SILVER

Judged on 11th July 2022

Judges: Richard Stephen and Emma Schofield

Judges Award: The Red House Stables and Carriage Museum along with their owner, Caroline Dale- Leech for the unwavering fundraising support for Darley Dale in Bloom and providing Bertie and Bassett (and Fiona) for the purpose of the judge's carriage ride around Whitworth Park.

Introduction

The judges were welcomed to the town of Darley Dale which is nestled in the Derbyshire Dales, on a warm and sunny afternoon by Val, Ingrid, Barbara and Edwin. The town is first mentioned in the Domesday Book and the judges met at the historic Whitworth Centre. Darley Dale in Bloom were re- entering EMIB for the first time since 2019, however they have remained busy throughout the pandemic ensuring the beds and boxes flourished to provide cheer throughout the dark days! The Tour included a visit to Whitworth Park , views of the colourful A6 bed and planters, St Elphins retirement village, allotments, the primary school vegetable plots and culminated at the Church of St Helens Peace Garden. The judges then enjoyed refreshing tea and met some of the towns Bloom volunteers.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

As part of the tour there was an opportunity to spend some time viewing Whitworth Park by horse and carriage. The judges thoroughly enjoyed the tour around the park and to see its historic features, range of facilities (at a leisurely pace) and see the new developments that had taken place since 2019. The park was looking neat and tidy, the trees, shrubs and lake area were all being well maintained and were a credit to the park. Several well planted colourful wall troughs and various planters at the Whitworth Centre were a delightful addition to this very grand building. During the tour various points around the town provided pockets of colour and plants had been carefully chosen to withstand the summer weather. Around the entrance to the Whitworth Centre there was coherence in the colour choice (red, white and blue) in the troughs and all were a mixture of perennial and seasonal planting. The twinning with Onzain flowerbed with the roses and vines was a delightful feature. The two new beds showcased the Union Jack in recognition of the Queens Jubilee

and Peter's planters showcased some well cared for hanging baskets. The allotments at St Elphins Retirement village were being beautifully maintained and used by the residents which along with the community orchard and large wild flower area with mown pathways was a lovely addition to the already well established attractive front gardens. The Darley Dale Railway Station signal box troughs were also a colourful addition being looked after by a local resident. The Peace Garden at St Helen's Church has continued to develop with some well - chosen trees, shrubs and purple and white planting theme which added to the feeling of calmness.

Section B

Since 2019, there is less verge mowing around the A6 beds however this has led to increased biodiversity and the presence of wild orchids for all to enjoy. The Bloom group continue to work with the Town Council and Whitworth Centre to experiment with rewilding, wildflower planting generally greening and energy saving plans through more permanent planting and the recycling of plants in certain locations across the town. DDIB have been receiving assistance from the local garden centre with the use of peat free compost. Darley Dale primary School was progressing with their vegetable plots, Forest School's work, rural development project and its tree planting supported by the Woodland Trust scheme. St Elphins residential facility (a former school) has been developing a large wildflower area, with cut pathways and resting areas for residents to enjoy. The very impressive Swale was continuing to mature well with bull rushes and is becoming a refuge for wildlife. Darley Dale was graffiti free and their commitment to litter picking was evident through the evidence in the portfolio. Christine Townsend at St Helen's Church Peace Garden had taken part in the 'Big Butterfly count' and was developing some interesting wildflower pockets in the churchyard to increase biodiversity and she is also developing borders with cut flowers so visitors can use them to adorn grave spaces along with the volunteers who do the flower arranging inside the church.

Section C

The DDIB presentation and portfolio highlighted several fundraising events organised over the year in Whitworth Park that were attended by all ages. The award of a Town Council grant for summer planting was a welcome addition and enabled the Bloom group to plant Heucheras to give permanent background colour to the A6 beds and help to reduce replanting and maintenance costs. The Bloom committee have continued to take on the planting and maintaining of the planters, troughs and beds in the town and they are gradually encouraging some of the local residents to take part. Members of the Bloom group and other volunteer's litter pick regularly. It was good to see that The Grouse pub was contributing to the overall street- scene with their 6 good hanging baskets. The Church is continuing to be supportive of the Bloom and DDIB were winners of the local Town Council community project of the year. The judges enjoyed meeting members of the DDIB committee, volunteers, school children, and residents of St.Elphins as they maintained their allotments. The judges greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet more volunteers at St. Helen's Church over a well-earned cup of tea.

Areas for Development

Section A

The judges were a little disappointed not to have seen more of the developments in the allotments at Oddford Lane and talk with their owners. Perhaps look to develop the planting

near the 'tyre swans' and make more of that verge area as it is near an entry to the town-link to rocks and dry garden planting and the quarrying history of Darley Dale . There is a lot of building development taking place in Darley Dale consider taking the judges to see some of the landscaping instigated by the developers. The Red House Stables and Carriage Museum has been a big supporter of DDIB, consider taking the judges to that site to see the facility and their own planting schemes.

Section B

Whitworth Park is a valuable asset to the town, both through its history and ecological areas. Consider providing more historic information about the park and the Whitworth Centre either through the portfolio or as part of your initial presentation. The recently created Sensory Garden has become quite a feature within the park, however, perhaps consider some signage directing visitors to it and consider providing a paved /seated area to allow people to sit and enjoy your endeavours. Consider commissioning a chainsaw sculpture to be placed within the park as a centre piece to reflect the area intentions or historical links? Unfortunately, the opportunity to incorporate Darley Dale Railway Station and its rich heritage was not part of this year's tour and that historical link and the station garden was greatly missed. The area outside the Co-op has been cared for by the DDIB group and there was a lovely mining truck planter the Bloomers were maintaining – perhaps make more about the local links in history, about the quarrying with this as part of tour or in the portfolio. Landal Darwin Forest is within the Darley Dale district, consider widening your tour to include this facility in future years.

Section C

Perhaps within the twinning bed there could be some signage to provide some interesting facts about Onzain in France and the type of plants used in the display. It felt like a well-kept secret although the bed was indeed pointed out in the tour by Barbara. Recruiting new members has been a concern for the DDIB group and we encourage you to keep the social media aspects updated regularly with Bloom news and use IT to its best advantage. Encouraging young people at the school to come out into their town and be part of a planting session on a regular basis may help raise your profile amongst the younger members of the town or perhaps develop some local resident garden competitions to encourage all ages. The Bloom should continue to raise its profile, extend links with the school and encourage it to be part of the EMIB Schools competition in its own right as well as being linked with DDIB tour. We see from your Portfolio you have lots of local businesses and organisations who are supporters, and we suggest that you continue to develop links with local developers and businesses. The judges missed the opportunity to talk to David and June about their endeavours at the railway station. Remember that your portfolio can contain up to 12 double sided pages of information, photographs (seasonal) and press releases. Hopefully, the judges will get the opportunity once again to visit one or more of Darley Dale's Care homes and gardens.

Scores: A:30 B:22 C:21 Total 73



TOWN

Edwinstowe in Bloom

Level of Award : SILVER

Judged on 11th July 2022

Judges: Richard Stephen and Emma Schofield

Judges Award: To the Thoresby Miners Memorial Garden and all those who have been and continue to be involved with its development, care and maintenance for the benefit of the community of Edwinstowe.

Introduction

The judges were welcomed to the town of Edwinstowe which began its In Bloom journey from an idea that was first considered at a Parish Council meeting in January 2022. The judges were met by James, Linda, Carole and Celia at the village hall where they enthusiastically explained their entry into EMIB Bloom. The tour by car and on foot around the town of Robin Hood and Maid Marion's marriage held many delights including the Thoresby Miners Memorial Garden, Cenotaph Garden, High Street planters and hanging baskets, wildflower verges and the Sherwood Forest Craft Centre. The judges finished the tour at the cricket pavilion where they enjoyed refreshing tea and cakes and met some of the towns Bloom volunteers. "This visit is not the end of Edwinstowe in Bloom it is just the beginning" – and what a great start on their Bloom journey!

Section A

The Gateway signs were all planted up at the verge level with a variety of perennial and seasonal planting which gave a splash of colour whichever way anyone entered the town. No weeds were seen in the verge gardens. The volunteers had used the large number and wide variety of donated plants from the residents and local businesses and had done well with their arrangements to make attractive displays. The memorial garden, cenotaph and various planters and hanging baskets around the village kept the judges eyes busy as there was much to see. The hanging baskets and planted raised beds at the Sherwood Forest Craft Centre were very good as were the hanging baskets outside the Village Hall and the holiday cottages on Mansfield Road. All plants were well cared for, and the grassed areas were well maintained and edged. The Jubilee Park was neatly maintained, and trees well maintained with plans for further trees to be added in Autumn.

Section B

The Bloom group continue to work with the Town Council and to develop areas for wildlife. There was evidence of rewilding, wildflower planting on many areas across the town and the use of peat free compost and some mulching on the verge beds to improve the soil was apparent. The Bloom group's perseverance with BT has ensured improvements to their building and the volunteers maintain the wild verge meadow along the road frontage. Edwinstowe suffers with occasional graffiti vandals who visit the town, but the judges were impressed at how promptly and well the

Bloom group volunteers dealt with the problem as they had a been recently visited but any evidence had been removed in readiness for judging day. The Woodhead Business Centre have presented the Bloom group with a piece of land to create a future wildflower meadow, pollinator garden and space for composting which currently has been left this year to self - set with wild plants. The super bug hotel in the village hall garden created by the scouts was noted by the judges. The Parish Church of St. Mary (hugely important to Edwinstowe) is in itself architecturally beautiful and the former burial grounds were being well maintained. The RSPB Visitor Centre is a wonderful facility. The wildflower areas, whilst beginning to fade were impressive. Edwinstowe are lucky to have Sherwood Forest on its door step. Full of flora and fauna, marked trails and entertainment amphitheatre.

Section C

The Edwinstowe portfolio highlighted many community and fundraising events organised over the year and many future plans by the Bloom group including their awareness of a growing ethnic diversity in their community which they hope to build upon to encourage greater community engagement. They are well supported by the District and Parish Council, along with many community groups, organisations and businesses. e.g. Solutions for Accounting sponsoring the Hi - viz vests. Good to see the very good hanging baskets adorning the Royal Oak, Goffs, Benhams Confectionary, Black Swan, Karissma Hair, Smoke & Ice to only mention a few. Launay's and Fables also had well maintained attractive frontages for visitors to sit out in and enjoy. Their profile in the local community has been raised by personal contact, sharing articles in local newsletters and developing website alongside their poster, identity signage and banner 'Share a...' The Bloom committee have continued to take on the planting and maintenance of the planters, troughs and beds across the town and they are gradually encouraging some of the local residents and volunteers to take part. Members of the Bloom group and other volunteers have taken part in regular litter picks, a 'buntathon,' pebble painting and tree planting. They are creating regular social gardening sessions with the local church with the support of the local community RSPB officer, working with local care homes and a group of young people with learning disabilities. There are several very prominent Village Trail Information Boards located around Edwinstowe providing information about important buildings and people that have played a part in Edwinstowe's heritage. Interesting to see several Blue Plaques along the way too. More local trails are available online or as a leaflet take visitors around the town to explore the rich history of the church and links to Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest. The floral mannequin in one of the high street shops windows was also a delight.

Areas for Development

Section A

The judges noted from the portfolio the future plans to have more traditional planting and displays in the town centre , focusing on the High Street extending all year round interest. The gardens near the public toilets require further work to reach the standard the Bloom group are aspiring too, and we look forward to seeing how these develop on next year's tour. Consider how to edge those verge gardens so water does not run away on the slopes to improve the plants chances or consider what plant is in the location and whether in certain areas a different type of 'garden ' may be needed due to the conditions to maximise the horticultural excellence.

Section B

Although you evidenced litter picks in your portfolio and on the day we saw evidence of dedicated volunteers doing so, remember when taking the judges on their route they are looking everywhere so make sure street furniture is clean and well maintained, weeds in pathways and gutters are

removed and everywhere along the walking route is swept as there were a few areas that were spoilt by discarded cigarette butts/ wrappers. Your plans for harvesting rainwater and plans for conserving and watering the verge beds are important moving forward. The judges look forward to seeing the natural willow screen develop as planted by the volunteers to improve the appearance of the BT building and visiting Lidgett Park to see how the Jubilee copse mature on future tours.

Consider making more about the local links in history about the quarrying as part of tour or in the portfolio Judges noted that in your portfolio you are aiming to replace the current hanging baskets with water retaining ones which will cut down on the wasted water and time of those involved in their care. Alongside this consider the use of harvesting rainwater in hidden butts at key points around the town from roofs of permanent structures using down pipes e.g. bus tops. The grounds of The Parish Church of St Mary are being well maintained. With its large number of trees on site consider introducing a range of Bird / Bat Boxes which would encourage additional wildlife to the area. You may wish to consider visiting an allotment site as part of the general tour.

Section C

The Bloom should continue to raise its profile through its social media, town noticeboard and local newsletters, extend links with the school and link it in as perhaps a part of the Edwinstowe in Bloom tour. Perhaps include some of the younger volunteers to be able to meet the judges on the tour at key points to explain their contribution in the community or include them in biodiversity surveys you plan to participate in. There are plans to develop the Church Farm business area courtyard gardens/ carparks and consider impact as judges arrive to park in that area as there maybe opportunity to develop hanging baskets on the outside of the building. We see from your Portfolio you have lots of local businesses and organisations who are supporters and there is a growing pride amongst the local residents of their town which hopefully will lead to more volunteers joining the Bloom group. Perhaps build upon those historical links more with some information boards (you are not judged on content but are a way to ensure your judges are informed an encouraged to stay and appreciate an attractive point of the tour) around the town. Consider including this as part of a more detailed and developed presentation next year for the judges prior to the tour commencing. Also consider more carefully your vehicle and foot routes as elements of your tour this year overlapped, and you want to have a coherent route to showcase your achievements. Invite the local press on judging day to promote your work. Several sculpture 'information' sites - re Robin Hood / Maid Marion (by the main car park) were looking rather tired. Your entry would be enhanced if these could be improved. On the 'town' notice board in the High St, the judges believed that an opportunity had been missed by not informing the community that 'In Bloom' judges were visiting today.

Scores A:31 B:22 C:21 Total 74



TOWN

Bourne in Bloom

Level of Award: Silver Gilt

Judged on 7th July 2022
Schofield

Judges: Richard Stephen and Emma

Judges Award: To Bill Paulby and his assistant Phil for the provision and maintenance of the wonderful hanging baskets and containers that decorated the town so coherently.

Introduction

A warm day with sunny intervals greeted the judges as they travelled around the delightful town of Bourne, a historic market town in Lincolnshire. With their guide Ian Sismey, the Town Clerk, the judges thoroughly enjoyed the tour in a wonderful vintage car. Throughout the day the friendly atmosphere was felt as we met various volunteers and the "small but dedicated team" of Bourne in Bloom. The tour included stops for a walk in the well maintained memorial gardens, the war memorial, the planted shrubberies by the public toilets, garden of contemplation, the community orchard and the Bourne Woods only to mention a few. The judges enjoyed the welcomed refreshments, provide by Brenda, at the Heritage Centre which kept them going throughout a very interesting and well planned tour.

Section A

Horticultural Achievement

Bourne's impact with its coherent planting colour scheme was superb. The High Street was bursting with character throughout in its colourful baskets, planters and barrier troughs. Plants grown and maintained by Bill Paulby impressed the judges. His involvement has enhanced numerous public spaces within the Town. The attention to coherence and a colour theme for the jubilee and the general well-being of all the planting was a credit to the hard work of those who cared for them. Areas also providing impact were the 'Track and Rail' garden designed as a tribute to Raymond Mays and BRM by Debbie Cooke (as were the beds located adjacent to the public toilets), the beautifully planted beds by the public toilets, the planted Rotary Club 'Bloom' Boat was an attractive feature. A walk through the Burghley Arcade shopping centre with its well planted hanging baskets and raised planted beds was looking particularly good this year. A good watering regime and frequent dead heading ensures all remains at its best. Visits to the well maintained open green spaces of Wellhead Gardens, War Memorial and Memorial Garden along with an interesting visit to Bourne Cemetery and its new Garden of Contemplation were particularly good. The planters on the Stamford Hill roundabout were enhanced by the work of the ladies of the Bourne and District Flower Club repurposing the Jubilee Beacons to add to the display. Grass verges

all around the town were neat and tidy and reflected the attention to detail. Mr and Mrs Thompsons residential front garden was delightful and a credit to their hard work.

Section B

In the portfolio the Bourne Bloom group shared information about the other conservation areas that continue to develop across the town which informed the judges of its wide variety of areas of natural beauty and would be well worthy of a visit beyond judging day! It was good to meet Trevor, the Bourne United Charities Trustee who shared his knowledge and enthusiasm about the Well Head Memorial park and its links to the local history of Bourne Castle. The wildflower meadow was developing well as was the tree memorial area in the park. It was good to pop into the 'Don't Lose Hope Garden' and workshop to see the developments Don and volunteers have continued to make. The raised beds have matured since last year and the wide range of super vegetables that are grown here are shared with the charity's café in the town. There continues to be a good link with the local school Willoughby Special Academy who have developed their outdoor area and vegetable plots to use within their curriculum time. Bourne has a variety of heritage features, particularly linked with motor racing which are celebrated with memorials within the Heritage Centre and sculptures displayed in the gardens across the town. The judges felt privileged to be asked to be part of the presentation of a motor trophy base which had been lost for many years. The base was found / purchased by Gary Whitwell and was being reunited with the actual trophy won by the celebrated racing driver Raymond Mays. A quick meet with Willy at Bourne Woods was informative. Bourne Woods is classed as 'a planted ancient woodland' of 600 acres. It is full of wildlife including Lister Bats. Guided walks are given on a regular basis.

Section C

It was important to the Bloom team and the Town Council that families were encouraged to come back out of their homes and onto the street after the pandemic and the successful 'Light Night' project was a launch for this in March. The town's refurbishment of the planters and street furniture was seen to be progressing well and the repainted black and gold theme really set off the mixed perennial and seasonal planting. The route was clean and tidy and litter free (volunteers regularly litter pick) and roadside gutters were generally weed free as well. The Bloom is well supported by the Town Council and regular fund raising events take place throughout the year.eg. Festivals, classic car shows, market stalls, etc. The community orchard is maturing well and meeting Ayla Smith {Trustee for Friends of Bourne Wood} was informative, in particular hearing about future plans and the Wassail event. Information is shared through the Town Council website giving details of The Bloom progress and sponsorship by shops and volunteers. Good to see that local businesses are getting involved {M & S, Smiths of Bourne} Signage was evident along the tour route and showed a wide range of the community involvement and support. The portfolio lists a useful diary of Bloom events highlighting the regularity of litter picking, planting and weeding and other town events. The village of Dyke with its beautifully maintained raised planters is the most sustainable of the small villages that surround the town and as the town increases it may well become an integral part of the town and with this in mind, future Bloom work has to ensure its unique character and vibrancy is maintained and included in the tour. It was a pleasure to meet an enthusiastic Anna Mcivor (a volunteer and so much more) in Dyke. At the Mill Heritage Centre the judges met the press for photos and received a short commentary on the Bourne entry with a refreshing cuppa!

Areas for Development

Section A

Perhaps consider the Elsea Park residential gardens which have the potential to become involved in the Bloom Campaign or a local Bloom garden competition as part of the years activities. Consider selecting a location that is central, in order to create a Bloom feature to promote and increase the diversity and sustainability of your horticultural achievements build on the Bloom boat for example. Consider adding a little more time for walking around Bourne's main shopping area in order for the judges to enjoy your fantastic barrier troughs and hanging baskets.

Section B

The visit to the historical church in the cemetery should be built upon after the judges heard about your plans and perhaps incorporate some more interpretation/ heritage boards in the Wellhead Park especially about how it was to the original site of Bourne castle. The memorial to the motor racing and Mayes family outside the Heritage Centre was noted by the judges on the tour but could it be cleaned or reinvigorated / planted around to draw attention to it more in the community. To raise the profile of your composting and recycling activities consider including within your tour route the allotments. The route could include The Abbey church and the further developments at Eastgate. More consideration should be given to the wetland / wildlife areas of Elsea Park along the river with its wildlife as part of the tour to show the developing biodiversity and consider participating in some local or national surveys regarding butterfly/bird counts. etc

Section C

The portfolio was much improved and contained a wealth of community involvement, however, now perhaps consider including some of the younger members of the community you mention in it to be available to meet the judges- scouts etc or allotment owners to explain their role in the Bloom on judging day. EMIB Special categories are useful to highlight the achievements of Best Front Garden, Best Pub / Hotel and Best Retail / Commercial. Consider an entry to raise the Bloom profile. To set the scene for the judges it may be better to carry out the 15 mins presentation at the beginning and to make your tour more rounded include visits to the local care homes/ public buildings / allotments etc. Be aware of the timings throughout the tour to ensure you keep within the allocated time. Consider arranging for the judges to meet the Mayor somewhere along the tour.

Scores: A:35 B:24 C:24 Total 83

LARGE TOWN CATEGORY

SPONSORED BY VERTAS



LARGE TOWN

Gainsborough

SILVER

Judged on 7th July 2022

Judge: Joyce Slater

Judges Award: For Hastings Day Centre volunteers Aaron, Neil, Thomas, Jonathan and their colleagues who had worked hard through the last few years at Mercer's Wood working on paths, rails, tree planting and other conservation activities.

Introduction

The judge was met by Vaughan Hughes and Anna Grieve from Gainsborough in Bloom, Town Council Mayor Pat O'Connor and Cllr Devine from West Lindsey District Council at Thonock Park Golf Club before being taken on a tour of the town to meet Bloom supporters and representatives of many community groups. Covid and lockdowns had decimated the Gainsborough in Bloom Group, but Vaughan and Anna used local and social media appeals to rekindle the group and get a new committee formed. Links were being forged and the judge was pleased to view achievements already taking place.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Despite the challenges, the group, residents and businesses ensured there were spring bulbs planted to make a lovely spring display in the town including naturalised snowdrops in Mercer's Wood. Gordon Tulley at Respect Funeral Services planted 678 Winston Churchill Daffodils representing each of the fallen heroes from Gainsborough in WW1 and WW2 which were very impactful. Summer planting was in Queen's jubilee themed displays including beds of geraniums seen at Morton's Corner planted and well-maintained by Ronan and Chloe from Connexions. The hospital garden had clearly looked lovely a few weeks ago, though now past it's best. The planters in Richmond Park looked good and were planted and maintained by Council staff who were working hard to retrieve the structure of the park garden. Perennial planting in the new bed at Marshall's Yard was very attractive and the centre's 46 hanging baskets and planters were full, attractive and clearly well cared for. This had followed a display of spring bulbs. Individual shops had followed suit and managed their own planters which included herbs as well as flowers. The Rotary club "wheel" display had a platinum jubilee '70' theme. Around the town centre large colourful planters were also in the Queen's jubilee red, white and blue theme and had impact. Large trees in planters in the Market square were newly planted. The church garden is a peaceful haven looked after by Church Wardens Joan and Fiona. The Plough business hub small meadow garden was a

good planting choice, though starting to go over. The medieval and Tudor plants in the Old Hall Gardens were very interesting and a labour of love for the garden group.

Section B

Julie Godson and the Gainsborough litter pickers became a very active group through lockdown and have continued through this year. The judge noted the wellbeing benefits of the group at a personal level and in keeping local streets tidy. They are to be commended for their efforts. Mercer's Wood is a small but very accessible wildlife area, and it was good to hear that 50 Hazel and Oak trees had been planted. The community orchard area was underplanted with wildflowers which looked very good. Gill, Susan, Gill and Darren and the conservation volunteers, including those from the Hastings Day Centre, have clearly put a lot of work in to ensure this area can be enjoyed by the public. It was good to see several bird and bat boxes and learn that wildlife surveys were undertaken. The town centre has received funding for a major redevelopment and historic frontage refurbishment which will make the Market Square area and nearby streets more attractive.

Section C

Given the challenges faced by Gainsborough in Bloom it is appropriate that their plans going forward are for a sustainable rebuilding of Bloom activities. Collaboration with West Lindsey District Council and Gainsborough Town Council has been particularly valuable, including the watering arrangements for planters in town and in Richmond Park. The engagement with community groups like Connexions, Hastings Day Centre, conservation volunteers and Rotary has extended community representation across all age groups and is excellent. STANS pocket park is a cleared wasteland and contains a disability friendly outdoor stage for events and some planters. Julie Musonda's efforts in clearing this area and her work with Feeding Gainsborough is impressive. After a difficult 2 years for local businesses the Bloom Group are grateful for business sponsorship of planters and hope to return to fundraising to better enable them to deliver their aspirations. A recent funeral collection donation enabled the planting of a memorial cherry tree which reflects the local appreciation of Gainsborough in Bloom activities. As the Bloom group capacity develops, they hope to rekindle engagement with schools. The group plans to rebuild their website, having secured some funding to do so.

Areas for Development

Section A

The hospital garden had gone over as Colin had been away. It may be the right time to re-establish a gardening group there to ensure that the garden can be sustainably maintained. Given the stresses faced by NHS staff it may be a good wellbeing activity on site. The group may wish to consider more mixed planting of perennials, grasses and annuals for summer displays. These can be propagated easily and can be very cost effective. The Rotary Wheel needed ongoing maintenance to keep it at its best.

Section B

Mercers Wood is a great wildlife area, and the judge was surprised that it was not being used by local schools for forest school activities. It would also be a great place for schools to get actively involved with nature and wildlife monitoring surveys alongside The Conservation Volunteers. The newly planted oak and hazel saplings may struggle to thrive because of competition from undergrowth and may benefit from intervention. The Market Square area looked tired, with considerable littering and detritus. The visual impact of this

tends not to build pride in a place as it looks uncared for. Vandalism was mentioned several times during visit and seemed to be accepted. Sadly, it was seen in Richmond Park with damage to the old greenhouse, outbuildings and barriers. It detracted from the sense of pride in the town and a multi-agency approach may have an impact especially when the town centre refurbishment is completed.

Section C

The group has received funding from Local councillors from their Councillor Initiative Fund to rebuild the Bloom Group website which will be really useful. The judge wonders whether greater engagement with social media – used more by families and younger people - might have more impact and can be easier to keep up to date. Julie Musonda from Eudaimonia was very involved with addressing food poverty & Feeding Gainsborough. The judge wonders whether an approach similar to the Incredible Edibles might be helpful, especially in the planters at STANS corner. As the Bloom group rebuilds it would be good to see engagement with schools and nurseries to help encourage the next generation of growers and the RHS has a huge range of resources for schools on its website.

Scores A: 26 B:17 C: 17 Total Marks 60



LARGE TOWN

North Hykeham

SILVER

Judged on 11th July 2022

Judge: Joyce Slater

Judges Award: To Park School Day Nursery for turning an old school tarmac playground into a space for growing opportunities for the children

Introduction

Hykeham is made up of 2 villages, North Hykeham and South Hykeham, on the Fosse way south of Lincoln.

The judge was delighted to hear that Hykeham in Bloom leader Mark Reynolds had been recognised as the Community Spirit Champion for North Kesteven. The Bloom Group also won the Community Award in North Hykeham demonstrating that their hard work in challenging times has been recognised. On a very hot day the tour of formal and informal planting, woodland and park showed the efforts of volunteers and community groups to make Hykeham a more attractive place to be.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The planting by the council offices was excellent, a good mix of perennials, grasses and shrubs. Similar planting in the contemplative garden on the site of the old toilet block has developed well and showed a great use of perennial grasses. Around the town a range of planters were planted up in red, white and blue for the Jubilee. Individual Bloom volunteers take responsibility for a planter or area and can choose their plants from a pre-chosen selection of RHS recommended pollinator-friendly plants (currently marigolds, petunias, nicotiana & verbenas) donated by Pennells, the local garden centre. The Bloomers set them out how they want and maintain a specific planter or bed, and the pride in their individual planters was noted. There was variation amongst the planters but with a clear, coherent theme. The planters, especially the 3 tier large ones were positioned at major junctions for maximum visual benefit whilst still taking care to ensure visibility. Beds and planters were also effectively interplanted with rosemary, perennial salvias, fuchsias and shrubs. In winter, beds are planted with spring bulbs, polyanthus and pansies. The polyanthus were reused and replanted along the beck pathway, giving benefit to walkers. Spring bulbs are replanted in children's play area and shrub beds after a season in the planters. The War Memorial planting of shrubs and perennials looked good. Well-established planters in the station car park were cared for by Hykeham Station Adoption group and were detailed in the portfolio.

Section B

On the day before the judging visit there had been a very successful community event on the green attended by about 900 people. On the day of the visit the green was immaculate. There is good collaboration between the Bloom group and Hykeham Town Council, who water all the planters. Litter picks are undertaken during the year and the streets appeared

generally clean. Street furniture was mostly in good condition. The judge noted the switch from peat-based compost to peat-free and the strategy for a partial replacement of compost in planters reduced the volume of compost bought, which was both a cost saving and more environmentally friendly. All planters and beds were hand weeded and the newer beds by the town council offices and in the contemplative garden were effectively mulched. The continued efforts in the Old Orchard woodland benefitted residents, and it was good to see many different bird and bat boxes made by the Pelican Trust in place. Wildlife surveys by the Wildlife trust and water testing of stream and the River Witham have continued. An invasive plant survey along Witham and clearance of Himalayan Balsam is planned by one of the volunteers. The Millennium Park nature reserve and woodland are a great asset to the community, and it was good to hear that Hill Holt Wood are working with young people on woodland and conservation projects there. 'God's Acre', an area containing 3 closed graveyards behind Hykeham All Saints church has great potential for wildflower planting, and some have developed naturally as scrub has been cleared. It was good to hear that the diocesan ecology officer will be undertaking surveys prior to any major wild flower planting, and it will be interesting to see how this space develops.

Section C

The Bloom group membership has had a 25% increase in membership, and it was good to see them wearing hi-vis jackets that promote the bloom group. The judge liked the vinyls on the planters "kindly maintained by local residents" which seemed to minimise damage, and 'thanking the NHS' and there are plans to refresh these and the donor panels. Sponsorship by the Lions, local businesses (in kind and financially), Council grants and recent acceptance as a Co-Op Community Champion have and will enable the Bloom group to continue to improve Hykeham. The group has an active Facebook Page and regularly features in the Hykeham Gazette. It was good to hear of collaboration with the community payback team. From the portfolio the judge noted the Station adopters worked with Lingmoor primary School re Billy the pigeon & national pigeon service during WW2. Hykeham in Bloom have some great plans for the future including a 'bring a bag of bulbs' family planting day on newly adopted land, planting a wildflower meadow near the stream and hopes for greater collaboration with the adjacent academy.

Areas for Development

Section A

The inclusion of perennials and grasses worked well, and the Bloom group may want to increase this to extend year-round interest. New wildflower areas need careful planning to ensure that the right mix is used.

Section B

The judge noted that there was graffiti in a few places which detracted from the overall good impression, so you may wish to raise the profile of the issue. The group may want to try organic fertiliser to continue their more environmentally friendly growing. The annual wildflowers in the meadow area had gone over by the time of the visit and may benefit from introduction of native perennial wildflowers and yellow rattle. Water conservation and water management is becoming increasingly important, and the group may wish to explore the scope for rainwater harvesting. Some street furniture is looking in need of refurbishment.

Section C

The judge feels that continued contact with the local business community for both sponsorship and attracting new members is important as they may be better placed to help going forward. The judge recognises that contact with schools has been problematic with Covid and lockdowns and hopes that the group are able to rekindle that relationship at both primary and secondary school level. Hykeham in Bloom also plan to have a front gardens competition next year and the judge noted many good front gardens during the visit. It would be good to see this come to fruition. The judge was disappointed not to be seeing the allotments passed during the visit as they represent a different aspect of community growing. There has been work on historical information boards about the NAAFI but the group are awaiting factual information. Partnership with a local history group may help progress this. The local heritage trail may also be a point of collaboration.

Scores A: 29 B: 21 C: 23 Total Marks 73



LARGE TOWN

Melton in Bloom

SILVER GILT

Judged on 4th July

Judges: Peter Benham and Nora Robinson Smith

Judges Award: For Melton Town Estate who maintain many of the Parks, Market and Recreation facilities enjoyed by residents and visitors of Melton Mowbray

Introduction

At the Borough Council Offices we were welcomed by the Mayor, Chief Executive of the Council and members of Melton in Bloom. The town is very proud of its history with the Heritage Gardens, St Marys Church and historic buildings. We also saw a number of public open spaces which managed by the Town Estates founded in 1549. We met volunteers and supporters who make Melton Bloom during the tour, together with school children who were very keen to improve their local environment. Our tour concluded with lunch, which of course included the famous Melton Pork Pie with mustard.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

This year the planting colour theme was based on Jubilee Red, White and Blue and this was evident throughout the towns floral displays, and also taken up by local pubs to give continuity. The display of colourful bedding at the Memorial Gardens was also very good. A number of prominent areas have been recently refurbished and replanted including St Marys Churchyard where volunteers repainted the railings and refurbished the noticeboard. Parts of Heritage Garden have been refreshed with features like the train and canal boat rebuilt with the assistance of local groups and Bloom supporters. There were also a number of newly completed features; the Covid Memorial Garden is establishing, newly added heritage gardens supporting the Jubilee and Melton Airfield with a willow-woven Spitfire. The plants we saw were mainly sourced from local suppliers and both of the pubs were growing and planting their own hanging baskets. The 'plant a bucket' scheme managed by Dean Smith is again commended, together with the alien garden plants grown by pupils at Long Field Spencer Academy and the residential garden maintained by Silvia Baker was a delight.

Section B

The different ways the history of Melton is celebrated and shared with the community, from buildings with Blue Plaques to commemorative Heritage Flower beds, is impressive. There is also a Heritage Town Trail to guide visitors with informative notes and the Royal Melton branding. There were good examples of using recycled products with the use of plastic wood to create seats and using recycled items to refurbish the train in the Heritage Garden and the use of redundant sinks at Long Field Academy to contain invasive culinary herbs. The route we took through the Town was generally very clean and free of litter. The Wombles of Melton are to be congratulated in collecting some 4500 bags of litter in the previous year and 1279 in the current year. It is hoped that having made the areas of the

Town a cleaner environment users will respect these sites and their efforts will not be squandered.

Section C

Key organisations support the Bloom with the Borough Council, Melton BID and Melton Mowbray Town Estates all actively and practically involved in providing opportunities to improve the town. Publicity is supported using social media, together with Melton Times and Radio 103 The Eye. The Bloom group met regularly and braved the elements during Covid to continue their good work. The group is well organised and during our visit proved that they could raise funds and deliver imaginative projects. We met two schools who were involved in teaching the environment and we were impressed with their knowledge and polite manner. This philosophy will certainly engender good future citizenship and encourage them to improve their environment.

Areas for Development

Section A

The Heritage Garden at Parkside needs to make more information available to the public to fully appreciate each of the gardens. We were fortunate to have a guide and be given detailed notes about the ten gardens. Perhaps the gardens could be linked with the Heritage Trail and be included on the Discovermelton.com web pages. A QR code is all that is needed to link visitors to the appropriate web page. A number of the shops and businesses did not have any floral features and through Melton BID there should be opportunity to bring more floral interest, events and vibrancy to the shopping areas and help regenerate the Town and promote the local shopping experience. We felt that the Bloom group needs to strike a balance between introducing new projects, new plantings and the ongoing commitment to then maintain all features in the future. The use of perennial plants and boosting the garden competitions are ways that you can continue to add interest with minimal input.

Section B

Whilst we saw examples of recycling garden waste, we felt that the compost area within St Marys churchyard should be positioned more discreetly as it is quite prominent next to a path and in a sensitive burial area. It was unfortunate that the new wall photographs on the wall of Boyes were not in place during our visit: this initiative will brighten a blank wall and further help promote the Local Heritage of the Town. There are proposals to introduce more wild flowers and natural planting into the open spaces and car park areas within the Town. This will have a clear beneficial effect for wildlife and make the management of those areas easier. Some of the street furniture could be repainted or replaced: consider undertaking an audit and having an annual programme of improvements.

Section C

Covid has clearly affected the numbers of potential groups willing to support the Bloom with reductions in your garden competition, school involvement and volunteer support. It is felt that more focus should be given to raise your profile, publicise your work and increase involvement. This could include 'Melton in Bloom' stickers on barrier planters and information in shops, noticeboards and places where people congregate e.g. Dentist waiting rooms. Inclusion on the "Discover Melton" web pages should also be sought. Perhaps the prepared boards which were used for the presentation could be displayed in a vacant shop and periodically moved to a fresh location to help promote Bloom activities, gain new partners and provide details of how an individuals could join as volunteers. Review the

judging route to try and include allotments, a choice of residential areas, transport hubs and business areas. It should be remembered that once the judging commences everything seen during the time is judged and not just the places which are highlighted in your itinerary or where the taxi stops. It is good to have a Way Forward Document which recognises areas of improvement and ambition. It should also include how and when this will be achieved, together with any resources that are needed.

Score: A : 32 B : 22 C: 22 Total 76



Large Town

Stamford

SILVER GILT

Judged on 14th July
Slater

Judges: Peter Benham and Joyce

Judges Award: To Yvonne Wagstaff of Stamford in Bloom and Stamford Flower Club who led the 'Chairs team' and for her creative and inspiring and design of planting and chairs on the theme of 'The Queen'.

Introduction

John Betjeman described Stamford as "England's most attractive town" and its architecture is complemented by the Stamford in Bloom planters, beds and planted up chairs all around the town. The judges were met by Anne Ellis and Yvonne Wagstaff at the Crown Hotel before starting the tour, where Stamford in Bloom volunteers, partners, sponsors and donors were met in various locations. Stamford Town Council provided refreshments en-route before judges returned to the Crown Hotel to meet more members of Stamford in Bloom. The Stamford 'poet laureate' read a poem written for the bloom judging, a first for the judges.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Maintaining planting in 50 locations is a great achievement for the 30 + strong Bloom group and it was good to hear that more volunteers are joining the group. Most planters and beds are full of perennials, carefully chosen for the location, foliage and flower interest. Most plants have been propagated by the bloom group itself and few annuals are used. Plant selection and combinations are very knowledgeable and to ensure interest, planters are different but complementary. Extensive spring bulb and winter planting ensure interest throughout the year for residents and visitors. The judges were pleased to hear about the Rotary Club 'Purple for Polio' planting of 4000 bulbs. The planting of snowdrops in partnership with a child bereavement charity was particularly poignant. As well as the planters and beds the bloom group planted up 40 sponsored chairs customised to the sponsors business colours and this year on the theme of 'The Queen'. The planting in these shows great thought and originality and Yvonne and the team are to be congratulated for their hard work. Businesses take the chairs into their premises at night to ensure vehicular access on the old streets and their care and maintenance is acknowledged. It was good to hear that requests for chairs are still being received and that the majority are also planted up in winter. The music shop owned some bikes which are also 'flower bombed' by the local flower group with a floral display changing throughout the year. The judges noted the attractive and personal planting around Lord Burghley's Hospital. Not part of the visit however the friends of Stamford Station are station adopters who have started to improve the station area for travellers.

Section B

There is a very strong sense of local identity and pride in Stamford and the Georgian townscape, and the history of the town is well signed with information and maps of the town. There are a number of historical trails from the Tourist information centre. To maintain the heritage aesthetic new paving setts are being installed in the market square replacing old ones, which will look good but currently make the square less useable and accessible. The Eleanor Cross is a dominant sculpture in the town softened by planters around

it. There has been mixed success with the wildflower planting around the town. The Mindspace garden was a pleasure to see. With its accessible raised beds, edible growing and natural wilder areas it is a great resource for social prescribing and mental health support. The judges liked that it is also being used by a local primary school and the bug hotel was developing well. Water conservation in a town centre is always a challenge and the judges were pleased to hear that Stamford in Bloom used a 10,000-litre rainwater tank off St Georges church for their watering. Stamford in Bloom grow plants in a peat-free wool compost and 'recycled' of bulbs into the meadows and reused plants. Team Stamford are volunteers who litter pick and act as town wardens, actively resolving practical issues for the Bloom group and residents. The judges commend their hard work and efforts to keep Stamford looking good.

Section C

The group have regular meetings and numbers are growing, with an effective diary of planned work and consolidation of activities to ensure that bulb-planting, Christmas, summer and chair planting are all manageable. The Stamford in Bloom logo is seen on signage and in sponsor windows giving them a clear identity. Volunteers have decided that they want to be 'invisible' and not have identifying Hi Vis vests, sweatshirts etc. There is good local support with the press with regular features and columns. Stamford in Bloom actively promote themselves including getting on the Gardeners Question Time programme broadcast from Stamford in July 2022. The tour map was drawn especially for the Stamford in Bloom Group and the judges consider it one of the best they had seen. The group appears viable, receiving a range of grants, sponsorship from local businesses, donations and income generated from card and notelet sales. It has also used crowd funding to restore the Brownlow Street land and reduce unsightliness. The judges note the collaboration and partnership working with other community groups. The Burghley estates have provided valuable assistance and Stamford Horticultural Society care for St. Mary's churchyard. The Stamford community orchard was included in the portfolio but not the visit. The judges were impressed with the idea of the Stamford pizza, a project that was halted during Covid and they hope it will be reintroduced in the future.

Areas for Development

Section A

The planted-up chairs are a great success: perhaps a trail for them could be created as they generated much interest, overheard by the judges on the tour. The judges felt that the planting along Castle Lane was not looking its best at the time of the visit and was clearly high maintenance. You may wish to redesign the planting plans for this verge. Is there scope for more naturalistic planting / wild flowers in the meadows area as it would be better placed for wildlife? The judges recognised the effort to clear the Brownlow land but were concerned as to its ongoing maintenance.

Section B

Wildlife surveys in the Mindspace garden may help guide future planting and usage plans. An audit of the street furniture may be useful as although some street furniture was new (and instigated by the Bloom group) others were in need of refurbishment. Street cleaning was observed during the tour however the judges noted some litter problems.

Section C

Stamford in Bloom will need to continue to grow its membership to sustain so many growing areas.

The judges recognise that engagement with young people has been difficult during Covid and lock downs and hope that Stamford in Bloom will be able to reconnect with school pupils and / or other youth groups.

Scores: A: 32 B: 21 C: 23 Total Marks 76



LARGE TOWN

Royal Newark in Bloom

SILVER GILT

Judged on 13th July 2022

Judges: Peter Benham and Carl Beacock

Judges Award: For the maintenance and planting of St Mary Magdalene Cottage Garden

Introduction

The Bloom tour started at Cemetery with a welcome from the Mayor Councillor Laurence Goff, members Newark in Bloom and Friends of the Cemetery. Both Jenni Oliver and Jonathan George accompanied us on the Tour, with the Mayor making impromptu appearances at different points powered by his bicycle. Newark has some fine examples of buildings and features which have shaped its heritage from St Mary Magdalene 1100, the Market Place which has operated as place of trade from 1215, the Castle 12th Century, Sconce Civil War Fortress 1644 to the Ossington Coffee Palace 1882 built as a temperance hotel. We were very impressed with the strong partnership between the Town Council and District Council and the wide variety community groups who help deliver projects and make Newark Bloom.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The Cemetery was established in 1856 continues to attract plenty of interest. Visitors are able to trace family graves through The Cemetery Friends Group and enjoy the flower beds with tranquil surroundings that is a haven for wildlife. Thank you to James Radley for explaining many of the interesting features. At the Library Gardens we met Pamela and David and saw the area with trees that were saved by the community from a proposed car park. This community group is proud of their achievement and have already started to create an area of wild flowers. They also have plans to create a centre for environmental education in partnership with the Borough Council. The planting theme throughout the Town this year is Red White and Blue planting, with gold planting representing the crown and silver edging to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. The tiered planters within the Market Place were very impressive. The planted beds near the café at Sconce Park were very good especially by community groups who have been involved with the design planting and maintenance. The perennial planting at St Mary Magdalene Cottage Garden was a pleasant surprise and a good example of good plant selection to create interest in a difficult space.

Section B

Around every corner in the town centre is a building with a heritage pedigree. Many of the narrow pedestrianised streets have been kept with preserved shop fronts which are a delight for visitors and shoppers. Devon Park has a range of habitats which attract a wealth of flora and fauna. We were guided by Lynn Preece Environmental Programme officer and Christine Hinton from the Friends group who have been actively involved with new plantings and maintain the area. The site has LNR status and delivers a wide number of events each year to educate and enhance the experience of visitors. Everywhere on our tour was free of litter and congratulations must be given to Ben Stacey's Street Scene Team and local volunteers who keep the town clean. Two new sculptures were pointed out with one to remember the work of Irena Sadley who saved hundreds of children from the Holocaust and lived at the war in Newark. The

other is the Cavalier and Roundhead moved from Newark library and now positioned on the Bar Gate/ Castle Gate Island close to the castle

Section C

A bloom can only successfully operate with good partnership and in Newark there was evidence of the District Council and Town Council working closely together to support and encourage a variety of community groups. The involvement of children to learn about the natural environment, grow something and have fun outdoors at Hawton Holt. This valuable experience will bring benefits to each child and in the long term the community. Simon Hill Park Ranger clearly has some good ideas to widen the initiative with support from volunteers, schools, uniform groups and help from students at Brooksby College. We were struck by the amount of enthusiasm of everyone on the tour with their vision of how new projects can be funded and delivered. The Bloom group has been reformed after Covid, with new members and are already making their mark in Newark with new projects. They have held weekly meetings since March and have a core group of 15 members representing the community. It was clear that they have plenty of ambition and we look forward to seeing how the Bloom develops.

Areas for Development

Section A

We suggest that the Hanging Basket incorporate more training plants for example such as Bacopa, Golden Lysimachia and Trailing Variegated Nepeta. This will enhance the appearance by hiding the base and softening the sides of the basket. Perhaps other flowers can also be incorporated whilst maintain the colour theme. During the tour we were invited to view Beumend Gardens to see the Jubilee Sculpture. Some additional work is needed to bring the shrub beds to an acceptable standard. The Crop Drop at the Hawton Road Allotments is a great idea for distributing surplus crops to the community. Perhaps some of the groups should also be encouraged to visit the allotments and given an opportunity to garden or become more involved in Bloom. Thank you for our vegetables and the Honey supplied by Griff

Section B

Consideration should be given to the provision of a water butt at St Mary Magdalene Cottage Garden. We commend the volunteers Sue and Helen who carry water from home to keep the plants alive. There are available downpipes that could harvest rainwater from the Church roof. Furthermore a seep hose could also be laid through the herbaceous planting to evenly irrigate the area and reduce effort. We also noticed that to view the planting a seat might also be installed where currently where a commercial waste bin resides opposite the display. We noted that you had intentions to move towards Peat free which would be an excellent initiative. Perhaps in future years as you progress you could consider hanging baskets and containers with water saving reservoirs and perennials that encourage beneficial insects.

Section C

Route planning is an essential element as once judging commences everything seen is judged. Perhaps you could have commenced at the Cemetery on London Road, this would have provided some valuable additional time as we returned later to the wharf. Whilst we commend the use of electronic information for the portfolio, it would be useful to see pictures of your seasonal displays such as Spring and events/activities/projects that you have been involved with during the year. Alternatively some of this could be incorporated into a more photographic presentation. A final printed list given on the day of judging of where we are going, timings and the full name of those we are meeting would help as we only had an emailed copy. We found that a greater of QR codes could be used to extend the interpretation at Cemetery, Library Gardens, Sconce and Devon Park and Newark Castle. This will enable users to access specific webpages on a smart phone and avoid larger interpretation boards which can be expensive and

have to be replaced as information changes. Perhaps all your sites of interest could share a single visitor web site?

As business recovers from Covid and economic pressure the Bloom group should try to encourage more involvement from business. The direct sponsorship of features or funding of hanging baskets areas may possible. Alternatively it could also be having physical goods in kind such as the sugar beet soil washings you showed us or surplus goods and materials. Some organisations may also be prepared to give staff time to assist with projects.

A:33 B:27 C: 22 Total 92



LARGE TOWN

Boston in Bloom GOLD

Judged on 15th July 2022

Judges: Peter Benham and Carl Beacock

Judges Award: For the Fern border planting and maintenance by the Friends of Boston Cemetery

Introduction

The visit started at Boston Cemetery and Crematorium with a presentation in the Chapel by Allison Fairman, Chair of Boston in Bloom. We saw a number of new projects within the Cemetery and viewed the creation of a new woodland by the Boston Woodland Trust. At Willoughby Road Allotments a variety of educational, social and caring groups have established plots to support the community. There were good examples of how perennial planting can be used imaginatively and effectively. The tour concluded with the urban wildflowers at Haven Meadow which contrasted well with the immaculately maintained gardens at Fydell House.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The use and choice of perennial planting was excellent where the right plant had been planted to deal with very difficult growing conditions. Good examples were seen at the Cemetery, the Boston Buoys project, the Mayflower Bed, fern border at St Botolph's and a number of the new town centre planters. We were very impressed with standards of maintenance achieved by the volunteers within the garden at Fydell House which provides an immaculate backcloth for this historic community building. We are sure that Sir Joseph Banks would be equally impressed with the care and attention the garden receives. Sandra Hull and the Friends of the Cemetery are to be congratulated for a number of projects to tackle difficult planting situations, label many of the mature trees and create woodland walks working closely with the cemetery staff. Hopefully this will encourage visitors, enhance wildlife, educate and be somewhere the bereaved can have peaceful solitude. We also like the new Jubilee Bed in Central Park, and again the perennial planting. Congratulations to the Children from Wyberton Primary School, who submitted the design.

Section B

Heritage was a very strong element of Boston with the tower St Botolph's Church (Boston Stump) dominating the skyline and seen from almost every corner of the Town. More detailed social history is also incorporated into the various Art projects such as the Boston Buoys creating interest and a chance to reminisce. The Mayflower Bed and the number of preserved buildings in the Town Centre illustrate the Town's historic past. The Boston Woodlands Trust project is an exciting opportunity that many towns would love to have with 13 hectares of new woodland to be created so close to the centre. This will be great environmental asset and somewhere that future generations can enjoy. The Bloom has clearly thought about its environmental responsibilities with recycling planters relocated at

the Cemetery, compost from municipal collection, perennial plants bought locally planters with water retention reservoirs and the electric vehicle for our visit.

Section C

At Willoughby Road Allotments we were impressed at the amount of funding support that has been achieved, spurred on with the enthusiasm of Paul Collingwood. A number of the plots are now fully utilised by local community groups and charities, enabling them to provide outdoor opportunities, growing and eating crops, environmental education and supporting people in the locality. It is clear that there is strong support for the Bloom from various groups and individuals. This was witnessed during the tour from undertaking clean-ups, collecting litter, planting areas, looking after floral displays, maintaining gardens and encouraging interest in wildflowers. At Friary Art Centre a celebratory lunch was arranged where we met some of the individuals who make Boston Bloom; this strong group of local heroes truly help make the difference in improving Boston. Finally we note that the Boston in Bloom Partnership was formed in 2012: you have made significant improvements to Boston, and we hope you will find time to celebrate and mark the 10-year anniversary.

Areas for Development

Section A

We look forward to seeing the improvements and work of the station adopters in a future visit once the work current being undertaken by EMR is completed. Judging from the pictures we saw they are doing an excellent job to improve the appearance of the station. The Central Park has seen a number of significant investments such as The Art Deco garden, The Buoy garden and Skate park. Unfortunately one element which now needs some urgent attention is the central tarmac road which is uneven and crumbling away. We were informed that there were plans for replacement in the future and hope the new surface is high quality and more durable. Given the popularity of Central Park and its focus to hold key events we hope this will be completed in very soon. We noted some large weeds in the herbaceous beds and Art Deco Garden in Central Park, and some were also present in the tiered town centre planters. The removal of dead flowerheads and seasonal removing/splitting/thinning of some of congested herbaceous plants would also help the display. The Bloom group should try and encourage the community to participate in local competitions to improve their front gardens and help maintain the general street scene. Photos of your Spring Displays and a calendar of key events could be added into your Portfolio.

Section B

The standards of cleaning in the Town Centre need to be improved; many central areas have significant accumulations of smaller litter at the base of buildings, around street furniture and on pedestrian footpaths and bridges. A number of items such as litter bins require cleaning and attention. Whilst we appreciate that Covid and finance all impact on public services, Boston attracts good visitor numbers and has a wide catchment area for shoppers. The appearance and impression of the Town is therefore vital to achieve its economic and regeneration potential. During the tour we saw the Five Lamps lamppost which you hoped to renovate and move to a more prominent position in Central Park with the support from Boston Big Local. This will be an interesting historic feature and add additional illumination to the park.

Section C

During the tour we visited St George's Road, the 10 acres area for the PE21 Town Regeneration Scheme. We heard of the proposals which will have a significant impact on the centre Boston. Despite the area suffering with boarded up buildings we were impressed with spirited volunteers still willing to maintain a number of beds and features here. It will be interesting to see how this area develops to provide new opportunities and green space for everyone to enjoy. Publicity is important to all groups, and we felt that Boston in Bloom should be more proactive in telling the community about the work you undertake. We recognise that local media and the Borough Council Communication Team already give you support. However you have photographs and displays which could be exhibited at key locations to gain support.

Also looking at your website (post-judging) this needs updating, as the last update was in 2019. Whilst raising your profile locally it may be also worth focusing attention on a drive for more sponsors and volunteers.

Score: A:34 B:27 C:25

Total Marks 86



LARGE TOWN

Long Eaton

GOLD

Judged on 4th July 2022

Judges: Joyce Slater & Martha Wörsching

Judges Award: To the tree team - The volunteer Tree Wardens and the Tree Officer for their excellent work engaging with the public about the trees in the park.

Introduction

We were welcomed at the Town Hall by Tony Walker and Dave Bramwell (Erewash Borough Council) and the Mayor of Erewash, Councillor John Sewall and his wife. Highlights on the tour that followed included the perennial planting outside the library, planting in Brooklands Court, Wilsthorpe Road Allotments and West Park. Evident throughout was the dedication of many individuals, whether professionals or volunteers, in well-coordinated teams. In West Park we met tree wardens, those looking after the regular 5K Park Run and gardeners in the new greenhouse run by Erewash Borough Council, where seasonal plants are grown in a sustainable way.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

During the photocall in front of the Town Hall, we admired the new entrance area planting with herbaceous borders in yellow, silver and blue; the evergreen hedging worked well with spring bulbs earlier in the year. Excellent planting and maintenance was noted throughout the visit, making a memorable impression on us as visitors to Long Eaton; examples included the Queens Jubilee co-ordinated colour schemes and striking Union Jack flowerbeds in vibrant colours. Colourful planting in the barrier and tiered planters, beds and borders as well as in the mixed planting areas was striking and showed particular attention to planting detail as well as excellent maintenance. Floral and foliage combinations worked very well. We heard that the colourful bedding plants near the main roundabout and toward the Market Place were particularly popular among the public, and there had been numerous positive comments by many locals and visitors. The Union Jack beds were colourful, and impactful centred on a royal crown. The carpet bedding display to commemorate the centenary of the Sawley WI near the Town Hall used unusual plant materials in an imaginative and effective way. In the introductory presentation by Caroline Pollard we noted ample evidence of planting for year-round interest, and the planting of 65,000 bulbs for spring colour.

Section B

A sense of pride in local heritage was evident throughout the tour, e.g. new signage in West Park, a new interpretation board in the Town Hall grounds. Local identity is also enhanced with the new planters and flower beds around the railway station, where there is a new interpretation board and a community garden created by 'station adopters' to welcome

railway users. The canal and the large West Park running along one side of it offer ample space for biodiversity, and this is also enhanced in some special rewilding areas in the park as well. On the visit to Wilsthorpe Road Allotments it was noted that many use rainwater; as well as a wide range of vegetables, we noted mature and new fruit trees, wildflowers, a thriving natural pond and a composting toilet. Peregrine falcons are nesting on an old factory chimney within view from West Park, and the park is actively used by bird watchers. Unmown grass verges provide habitats for insect and bird life. Planting near the West Park Butterfly Gates focused on the importance of pollinators and there is extensive use of hand weeding of flower borders. The large variety of trees and shrubs in West Park and in some residential streets provided very good year-round interest, and Jamie the Tree Officer is to be commended for her enthusiastic management of a large number of street, native and ornamental trees and for the network of volunteer tree wardens. The West Park Tree Trail, with its free leaflet encouraging the public to join the Friends of West Park, plays an excellent role in developing more educational and civic engagement and enhances better understanding of the legacy of the natural and built environment of this historical area. The ongoing refurbishment and hard work by park staff and volunteers, including planting new specimen trees and 20,000 bluebell bulbs along the canal, enabled the Park to achieve Green Flag status. The Council runs an annual tree give-away in autumn: initially native trees, now dwarf fruit trees better suited to modern gardens, it encourages wider public interest in the environment. The West Park nursery produces plants in a sustainable way, in peat-free compost, using biological controls. Water is recycled from the splash pool in the park; there is more use of drought tolerant plants; many beds are mulched to retain moisture. It was very good to hear about the multi-agency approach to deal with graffiti in the town which had been a problem in the past but was minimal on the day of the visit. The Neighbourhood warden has clearly had a beneficial impact on the streets, nipping problems in the bud; on the day of our visit no dog fouling was seen, and littering was minimal. The free "Pride Line" makes reporting problems by phone easy for residents. The Friends group and Tree wardens are also active in several local nature reserves detailed in the portfolio.

Section C

There is no doubt that Long Eaton has a very active approach to community participation and consultation helped by active media coverage and use of social media. 41 Long Eaton in Bloom partners are acknowledged in the portfolio which is impressive. The judges were pleased to hear that the Erewash gardening competitions for residents and schools have continued. During our tour, we met many keen volunteers as well as professional gardeners working enthusiastically with members of the public, for instance in the library grounds (where members of the horticultural society care for the borders), in Brooklands Court and, of course, in West Park, where we saw evidence of active year-round planning. Members of the public mentioned that involvement in greenspace activities during lockdown had been a 'life saver', because of the social aspect of these activities. It is pleasing to see that the many well-funded new facilities in West Park encourage the public's participation in a healthy life style and enjoyment of the natural environment, such as the excellent new green gym installations and the splashpool and new sun shelter, all enhanced by new signage. All this can be seen as part of an educational programme directed towards young and old; the 5K Park Run on Saturdays and the children's run on Sundays are all part of this policy of active outdoor living and an emphasis on pride in local amenities. The involvement of many committed volunteers who support activities around the year is highly commendable, and the fact that there is a waiting list for businesses to sponsor flower beds reflects well on engagement with the business community. The Long Eaton Town Deal is a 10-year £25

Million regeneration and refurbishment project that will further enhance the town centre to the benefit of residents.

Areas for Development

Section A

Although we were shown photos of children being involved in spring bulb planting, planting out winter bedding plants in some of the borders as well as tree planting in the park, we did not meet any younger people engaged with gardening because of COVID restrictions. We hope that next year there will be an opportunity to see some school gardening and children showing enthusiasm about growing flowers, vegetables and trees and in turn enable them to learn about all the efforts that different community groups are investing in horticultural as well as environmental work for the benefit of residents in Long Eaton. Long Eaton in Bloom may wish to consider more mixed planting that includes drought-resistant perennials as they are heavily reliant on bedding; it can also be a cost-effective approach. The hanging baskets were good, however, some needed to fill out. A lot of the planting is focused on beds around the major roads and junctions around the town which gives a great impression. Given the ambitious plans for the Long Eaton Town Deal, it would be good to see a greater focus on more plants and trees within the town centre and shopping area to soften the urban landscape built into the plans.

Section B

Plans to develop the canal access are an important step to connect different parts of Long Eaton in an environmentally beneficial way, and we hope the plans come to fruition in the near future. As part of this we heard that there is a plan to build a new bridge over the Erewash canal to link West Park with the town centre. This link would be an ideal opportunity to encourage more walking and cycling between the park and the town centre, while at the same time giving better access to wildlife areas along the canal. It may lend itself to wildflower planting for biodiversity. Long Eaton may want to combine the annual free tree event with information about local environmental volunteering opportunities as they are likely to appeal to the same people.

Section C

The Long Eaton Town Deal is a massive project and could have an impact on Bloom activities. A review of Bloom management plans may be beneficial. The Bloom group may wish to consider about how small businesses can also get involved with Long Eaton in Bloom given the sponsorship costs of a planter/bed.

Scores: A : 35 B: 25 C: 27 Total Marks 87



LARGE TOWN

Ilkeston

GOLD

Judged on 12th July

Judges: Joyce Slater & Martha Wörsching

Judges Award: To the Friends of Straw's Bridge for their fundraising and hard work to improve the planting in many areas of the reserve, the installation of an inclusive picnic bench and their engagement with the public especially in their many nature watching events.

Introduction

We were welcomed by Tony Walker and Dave Bramwell (Erewash Borough Council) and the Mayor of Erewash, Councillor John Sewall and his wife. A presentation by Caroline Pollard outlined the points of interest of our tour of Ilkeston and showed many examples of work done by community groups throughout the year. After a photocall in front of the Town Hall, we met the Neighbourhood Warden and garden ambassadors from Chaucer Junior School whose enthusiasm for gardening was infectious. We were impressed by the high quality of colourful planting and the mature street trees around the centre of the town.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

We saw many examples of impressive coordination of plant materials and excellent horticultural maintenance, especially the Union Jack beds on the main traffic islands in the centre of Ilkeston which were part of the Queen's Jubilee commemoration. Barrier baskets were well planted and full of colour, as were the large planters and war memorial planting. 80 hanging baskets around the town added interest. The trial of wildflower planting in urban and park settings worked very well and the effect was very attractive. There was good photographic evidence of striking seasonal planting schemes in planters and beds as well as in the Stanton Road Cemetery and Victoria Park. The planting around the church was a credit to the Friends of St Mary's church. Considering the challenging growing conditions this year, the design of the long herbaceous borders in Victoria Park were a pleasure to see, with their delicate palette of colours, from pale yellows to the darkest purples and reds. The shrub beds with evergreens and hydrangeas were fresh and beautifully maintained. The 'Victorian' carpet bedding in the park was beautifully done. The Tree Trail, the well-maintained lawns and planting by the Bowling Green in Victoria Park all manage to enhance the overall horticultural quality of this park, restored more recently with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It was good to see the allotments where plots were well maintained and there was clear evidence of co-operation and support between plot holders.

Section B

There was very good evidence of a sense of pride in local heritage: The Town Hall and the Market Square with the War Memorial and well-designed planters and floral decoration were a focal point. The Stanton Road Cemetery, the first non-denominational cemetery in the country, is a haven for wildlife and valuable outdoor space for local residents while also

offering the visitor an insight into 19th century town life with information boards easily accessible. The wooden sculpture of Ilkeston's tallest man is of historical interest, and it was good to hear that there are plans for it to be refurbished. The green flag nature reserve at Straw Bridge was impressive, with clear interpretation boards, well-laid out paths and wetland. It is close to the town centre and can be reached on foot or by bike within minutes; it incorporates the area of Peewit Carr consisting of rich grassland with orchids and sedge beds, and the ecologically sensitive planting and maintenance is a credit to the team. The judges were impressed with its accessibility, especially the new seating. We particularly liked the 'Let's Chat' signage on benches to address isolation and loneliness. There is a carefully managed wild corridor linking several nature reserves and natural spaces, to be further enhanced in the golf club rewilding project, and it was good to hear that there was and will be extensive community consultation. Pre surveys and ecology surveys are integral to the Masterplan, and it was good to see them factored in at the pre-design stage. The Grade 2* listed Bennerley Viaduct, the Iron Giant, constructed in 1877-78, has been renovated and reopened this year. It is another piece of Erewash's heritage that contributes to the wildlife corridor opening up a wide variety of different habitats between Nottingham and Derby for walkers and cyclists. An annual tree give-away of fruit trees by the council is also encouraging a wider public interest in looking after the environment. Seasonal bedding plants are grown in a sustainable way at the Borough Council's newly rebuilt glass houses at West Park in Long Eaton, in peat-free compost, using biological controls. Mulches from home-made compost and leaf mould from the parks and cemeteries are used in beds to retain moisture. Hand-weeding is used extensively. There are re-cycling collection centres and many litter bins. The Neighbourhood Warden scheme is operational, and any problems with littering, fly tipping and dog fouling are promptly dealt with.

Section C

This former mining and lace-making town on the border of Derbyshire thrives on the active involvement of its community groups, as can be seen from all the activities of the Friends of Bennerley Viaduct, Stanton Cemetery, Straw's Bridge Nature Reserve, Victoria Park, St. Mary's church and members of the tree warden scheme. The Tree Warden Scheme is supported by many residents and is overseen by the Council's Tree Officer; volunteers help at numerous events during the course of the year. The judges were impressed with the take-up of the Erewash in Bloom Gardening Competition with well over 75 entries in the Ilkeston area. It raises horticultural skills, inspires locals to develop their neighbourhood's attractiveness and raises awareness of environmental concerns. The quality of signage and printed materials to promote the care for the environment in many of the green spaces, in particular in the nature reserves, encourages wider public understanding and engagement as well as pride in the local natural environment. It was good to hear that responsibility for the environment has become normalised, as more and more volunteers ensure that picking litter is something everyone can help with. The judges were pleased to hear that plans were in place to use QR codes to provide information to visitors in this technological age. Media engagement, press releases and the use of social media are very actively used to promote Ilkeston in Bloom, and it is clear that residents are kept informed. The team at Erewash Borough Council and local community groups have been successful in obtaining funding for a range of projects and making full use of S106 agreements for the benefit of the local community. There is a strong culture of public consultation for large and small projects e.g.

the Ilkeston Parents for Play have made a valuable contribution to decisions about play spaces and equipment. The involvement of so many committed volunteers and groups who support Bloom activities and projects around the year is very good to see. The fact that there is a waiting list for businesses to sponsor flower beds also reflects well on Ilkeston in Bloom.

Areas for Development

Section A

With the exceptionally challenging dry and hot conditions this year, Ilkeston in Bloom may wish to explore and experiment with the use of more drought-resistant perennials and grasses in their planting schemes.

Some of the hanging baskets were not quite as full as they might have been. Victoria Park is a jewel in the crown however the gaps in the perennial borders (awaiting re-planting) let the borders down on the day of the judging visit. The empty 'dig for victory' beds reflected volunteer availability however left that area of the park looking somewhat less interesting than the rest of the park.

Section B

The use of rainwater harvesting is becoming increasingly important, and Ilkeston in Bloom may wish to explore how this could be introduced given the range of public buildings in the area. The Stanton Ironworks redevelopment project includes provision for the recreation of mosaic habitats lost in its redevelopment, and it will be interesting to hear of how this will be implemented. Similarly, the re-development of the old golf club to further interconnect the natural corridors will be an exciting environmental opportunity, and the judges hope that the environmental surveys and stakeholder consultation genuinely informs decisions about its future. Some of the street furniture required attention.

Section C

Given the scale of the projects regarding the Golf Club, Stanton Ironworks and Bennerley viaduct to name but a few, it may be appropriate to review the management plans to ensure momentum is maintained.

Engagement with the business community could be extended from sponsorship to include opportunities for corporate/employee volunteering especially given the range of environmental projects that will be created in the next few years. We enjoyed meeting Cali, Sophie & Willow, 3 Garden Ambassadors from Chaucer Junior School, with their leader Kerry Wheatley: it would be good to visit one of the local schools next year to see how the new generation of gardeners is contributing to Ilkeston in Bloom.

Scores: A : 35 B: 26 C: 27 Total Marks 88



LARGE TOWN

Market Harborough

GOLD and Category Winner

Judged on 5th July 2022

Judges: Peter Benham and Joyce Slater

Judges Award: To Judy Burrage for her commitment to ensure the smooth running of the Steven Street allotments and especially for her composting and green manure demonstration areas.

Introduction

The judges were welcomed by Peter Eddie and Barbara Tallis: a comprehensive tour encompassing Steven Street Allotments, Canal basin, St Luke's hospital, Ridgeway Primary School, Town centre, Memorial gardens, Riverside Walk and Welland Park giving judges a clear view of the achievements of Market Harborough volunteers and partners. At the Memorial Garden we met Rani Mahal, Vice Chair of Harborough District Council and her consort Paula Whelan who were very complimentary about the benefits of Bloom initiatives. Despite recent challenges Market Harborough in Bloom continues to make Market Harborough an attractive town with colourful and interesting planting year-round.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Market Harborough in Bloom propagate many perennial plants themselves and also grow on plug plants to a very high standard in their greenhouse & polytunnel. The new oak planters around the town are very attractive and the gear shift toward perennial planting interspersed with bedding plants and grasses was particularly effective. The rose garden, herb garden and formal bedding were excellent and well managed. The spring bedding included the planting of 16,000 bulbs. The volunteers and bloom partners are to be congratulated on their hard work. Judy Burrage gave a tour of the Steven Street allotments which are well used and maintained. It was good to see their use by community groups as well as individuals and families. The composting demonstration area, green manure demonstration beds and micro plots for new gardeners are a real asset. At the canal basin Ann and Peter Hartley had created a beautiful garden with carefully chosen planting as well as tending attractive planters around the basin itself. The staff at St Luke's hospital, supported by the Friends of St. Luke's, have again improved the appearance of the approach to the hospital through naturalistic planting and have plans to further extend the areas of planting. The memorial garden is another attractively planted area just off the square and is an oasis for local residents near to the busy town centre.

Section B

There is a clear and strong sense of pride in Market Harborough and the Council is actively redeveloping the town square area. The new oak planters reflect this commitment, and it was good that Market Harborough in Bloom were able to contribute to the development plan. There is widespread evidence of planting for wildlife in planters, at the allotments (many plot holders have embraced planting for pollinators and for biodiversity), at St. Luke's

and at the Hammond Arboretum restoration project mentioned in the portfolio. Along the millennium walk by the river Welland there were 2 excellent wildflower meadows, and the team are to be commended for their impact. Bird boxes were in use and there was a dipping area for children by the Welland, which is well used. There is a clear commitment by the Bloom group to more environmentally friendly growing, with peat-free compost and home-made compost (using the new sieve), comfrey fertiliser and hand weeding. A bee-friendly maintenance regime has been adopted in the rose garden with a vegetative mulch and using bee friendly supplements. The box hedges are managed using box tree moth traps. The propagation of plants from their own stock is very cost effective and fun to do. Pots are washed and reused for plants and as ballast in the planters. On the tour the town was clean with no graffiti or dog fouling evident and the specific dog exercise area in the park will be a great help in this respect.

Section C

Market Harborough in Bloom is well established and well supported. They continue to have a strong group of committed active volunteers with 40% of the volunteers new to the group despite the challenges of the last 2 years. They have a clear plan of what they have to do year-round and are organised into sub-groups to make things happen. Reskinning the polytunnel is their next priority before winter. The notice board in the Welland Park is informative and interesting, the use of social media contacts a wider audience. It was good to see their involvement with school groups, cubs and guides as well as hosting evening sessions. The funding from Harborough District Council and sponsorship income from local businesses has been augmented with bequests which reflect the value placed by the community on their work. Market Harborough in Bloom actively works with Ridgeway Primary School and their wellbeing garden is a credit to the pupils, Georgie Willcock and Market Harborough in Bloom volunteers. The school has ambitious plans for a sensory garden alongside growing edibles and planting trees and the partnerships with Market Harborough in Bloom and other community groups will be invaluable. It was good to hear how surplus produce from the allotments is donated to the ecovillage community fridge. Market Harborough in Bloom are a member of the Sustainable Harborough Community and the Market Harborough Woodland group have entered as an IYN.

Areas for Development

Section A

Much of the planting in the town centre was at ground level and there is scope to increase the visual effect on buildings along the High Street. This may be part of the town centre improvement plan. Those businesses that had done so stood out on the judging visit. The plans for the railway station, given the positioning of the old planters, are ambitious and will improve the approach for visitors. The Queen Elizabeth roses in the memorial garden were attractive and the bloom group may wish to consider some underplanting to balance that growing area with the fuller planting around the colonnade.

Section B

Whilst the streets were clean, litter and graffiti free the judges noted considerable kerb weeds on residential streets which detracted from the overall hard landscaping. Some of the street furniture is a little tired but Market Harborough Council has plans to replace them soon as part of the Market Square development. The new oak planters are indicative of the high-quality plans. The judges hope that the refurbishment of the heritage sign by the church are included in the plan. The wildflower areas are looking stunning. In the year 2 meadow, which was more shaded, grasses were establishing, and more yellow rattle

planting could be beneficial. The judges were not made aware of any baseline surveys or monitoring surveys of wildlife to evaluate the impact of changes in planting styles and the mini arboretum tree choices. Water conservation and management is a challenge for the future.

Section C

In the park the relocation of the bowling club has resulted in a vacant green area and a closed club house and toilet block. This is a great opportunity for public and stakeholder consultation and engagement to determine the best use of this space. It may be a good time to reintroduce local garden and business planting competitions to engage with the wider public, given that many people have a greater appreciation of growing plants and enjoying outdoor spaces since the lockdowns. The judges saw many of the volunteers from afar and it would be good to be able to speak to more of them during the visit, perhaps sharing the refreshments with them at the end of the tour.

Scores A: 36 B: 26 C: 27 Total 89

SMALL CITY CATEGORY

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SMALL CITY CATEGORY

Scunthorpe

Level of Award: SILVER GILT

Judged on 5th July 2022

Judges: Richard Stephen and Julie Walker

Judges' Award – to Andrew and Donna Clifford, for the Baby Rainbow Memorial Garden at Central Park.

Introduction

Judges enjoyed a visit to sunny Scunthorpe, known as 'the industrial garden town', thanks to its many accessible parks which are full of well-cut grass and beautiful trees. This year Scunthorpe hopes to inspire more interest in gardening with tiny 'urban parks' in planters beside roadsides and pavements. One impressive new project has become the talk of the town – a stunning 4km stretch of wildflower meadow along the central reservation of Mortal Ash, the main route to Grimsby. Scunthorpe, you are well on the road to success!

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

Scunthorpe aims to spark horticultural curiosity and interest by adding flowerbeds and planters that can be seen from the pavement or highway. For instance, roadside beds in Central Park have been refreshed effectively with Lavender, Mexican Fire Grass, giant Beefeater Lupins and Blue Fescue. Trees at Kingsway Gardens have had lower branches removed to improve the view into the park. Horticultural interest has been added to 14 of the 70 roundabouts, generally with Cordyline and grasses. The Star Bed in Kingsway Gardens is now planted with perennials, mostly grasses, and looks very effective. The bespoke raised wooden planters at the entrance to Woodlands Crematorium have been beautifully planted with a variety of perennials, grasses and shrubs. Within the grounds of the crematorium there are an impressive 98 species of trees, and the judges were pleased to hear that interpretation boards are planned for wildlife, horticulture and trees. Community Payback joined council staff in planting 15,000 bluebells on this site. The flower and shrub beds on display around the crematorium added to the overall tranquillity and ambience of this facility. It was also good to hear that 20% of the plants in the town's bedding displays, as well as perennials, have been grown in-house, with plans to increase this year on year. There is much grass-cutting to do across the town, and this is generally of a high standard. Scunthorpe is in the process of trying to reduce annual bedding displays by 60% by moving

towards more sustainable planting schemes. The judges were informed that across the borough there are 24 barrier troughs and 60 hanging baskets. e.g. Blue Bell Inn, McKenzies Butchers. At Lindsey Lodge Hospice, the gardens were looking particularly attractive with colourful hanging baskets and well-planted beds with a strong mixture of perennials, grasses and shrubs. There has also been an emphasis this year on Wards that have been left behind – ‘levelling up’ – creating allotments and educating people in horticulture.

Section B- Environment

A great partnership with John Leggott College received a £5,000 grant from the RHS. A carbon garden designed by student competition winner Charlie in the shape of a carbon atom has been created in wildflowers on Central Park, with a 100-year-old olive tree at its heart. When the interpretation panels arrive it will be a great resource, educating park users on the importance of carbon capture. An impressive range of wildflower areas included Mortal Ash road – 4km of meadow planting along the road to Grimsby – as well as a large Jubilee wildflower meadow sown largely by volunteers. There’s an eco roof planted on The Pod, and ‘bee stops’ on the top of bus stops. It was also impressive to see 4,000 Laurels and Photinia replacing fencing along the roadside. About 60,000 trees have been planted by volunteers over the past two years, and there is a pledge to plant 30,000 bulbs each year. Peat-free compost is used across the borough and sites are glyphosate-free. Volunteer litter-picks are held in the parks, with more than 1,000 registered to take part. The Wildlife Centre at Healy Road Allotments is a former rubbish dump, now leased to Barry. Supporters include Rotarians who have provided a second-hand cabin for the site, soon to be painted by a Duke of Edinburgh Awards group. The pond is thriving with frogs, wildlife-friendly planting, and an impressive bug hotel. The site is now ready to open its gates to local Cubs, who with volunteer Emma will be planting and looking after the care of the pond, and the younger Squirrels, who will be doing bug hunts and games. The site is also used by a dementia group, and local people are encouraged to bring a picnic. The wildlife camera shows that the site is also popular with foxes and a hedgehog. The Samaritans charity was founded in Scunthorpe and is part of the local heritage. There are already various partnership flowerbeds. A new lavender walkway and herb beds being created in Central Park leads to The Samaritans ‘Let’s talk’ benches, strengthening this link. Local heritage is also represented through five limestone boulders on Central Park which feature in a display representing the town’s geology and its five Wards.

Section C – Community

The Baby Rainbow Memorial Garden on Central Park has been created by Donna and Andrew Clifford since the sudden death of their baby son, Rory, two years ago. They have been overwhelmed by support they have received from volunteers and companies, and by the way the garden has brought together people of all ages who have at some time suffered the loss of a baby. There are already more than 100 memorial plaques. There are rainbows galore, along with highly appropriate planting such as Senecio ‘Angel Wings’ and Dicentra spectabilis ‘Bleeding Hearts,’ as well as a rainbow display of spring bulbs. The next highly-anticipated feature is a memorial tree fabricated in steel by the local college. The Broughton Bloomers volunteers help in Central Park, and the Community Payback team is involved with maintenance at Woodlands Crematorium, including hedge cutting and bark chippings round trees to reduce the need for strimming. Two volunteers in parks have now secured jobs with the council team. Lindsey Lodge Hospice proudly displayed a number of attractive and thought-provoking sculptures. It is good to see that students from John

Leggott College will be getting involved with several other projects in the future in partnership with North Lincolnshire Council.

Areas for Development

Section A

Mulching is effective for weed control, but its use is patchy. Some beds would benefit from being mulched, whereas others are laid rather densely. Pay a little more attention to detail for beds on the judging route e.g. removal of stray weeds, dead-heading, and edging all flowerbeds to the high standard seen at Kingsway Gardens. The 'Fostering' floral display was very attractive and promotes a very important service, however you should consider covering the bare earth around the planting with something suitable that would further enhance this display. Consider including a visit to the town centre so that the judges can see more of your floral displays. Scunthorpe has some beautiful and unusual trees, such as the Catalpas and Liriodendron at Kingsway Gardens. Investing in interpretation boards and creating a tree trail would add educational value and interest to the community and the tour.

Section B

Graffiti and dog fouling did not seem to be a problem, but there was some litter seen in several places around the route. Remember that wherever you take the judges, including going from A to B, the judges will be marking along the way. The judges felt that more could have been said about Scunthorpe's rich heritage either within the portfolio or examples on site.

Section C

A portfolio is a must. It would give the opportunity to show more activities throughout the year, including spring bedding photos. It should also include details of funding secured, examples of media coverage and photos of volunteer activities. Scunthorpe has a variety of community groups already doing fantastic work. Encouraging them to enter 'It's Your Neighbourhood' is the next step to enable their work to be celebrated and acknowledged in its own right. Consider a wider representation of support on judging day – for instance Civic leaders, partnership organisations and community groups such as the Broughton Bloomers. Consider a visit to a school particularly if the school runs a gardening club which will give the opportunity for the judges to talk to some of the children about what they've grown. Try to encourage the Press to attend on the judging day. Alternatively take your own photographs of the judges along the tour so that you can post them on social media.

Marks awarded:

Section A: 34 Section B: 24 Section C: 21 TOTAL 79



SMALL CITY CATEGORY

GRIMSBY

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 14th July 2022

Judges: Richard Stephen & Julie Walker

Judges' Award: To James Elliott and his canoe for his major contribution to keeping the River Freshney and its tributaries clean and free of household and industrial detritus.

Introduction

The judges received a warm welcome from members of Grimsby in Bloom team at their headquarters located at The Pavilion Cafe. Though the weather was a little overcast, the tour certainly was not. Visits included the Crematorium, Peak Lane Fire Station, College Beds, Jubilee Woods and Alexander Dock Heritage Centre to mention only a few. The judges enjoyed a tour that was varied and showed some of the best sites Grimsby had to offer. Well done Grimsby.

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

The grounds of the Pavilion Cafe, the 'hub' of the Grimsby in Bloom volunteers, looked bright and colourful with a wide range of planting techniques used. e.g. tubs, troughs, a living wall, shrub beds, lawned areas, gravel beds and sculptures. It's an excellent and well-maintained place to have a relaxing coffee. Peaks Lane Fire Station was particularly impressive with a mixture of hanging baskets, troughs, colourful annual bedding, well maintained hedges, lawns, herbaceous borders and wildflower border. The judges appreciated the quirky planting in the firemen's helmets, Wellington boots and fire buckets, as well as the model fire engine which was cleverly thought out and well executed. The Red Hot Pokers did not go unnoticed! Mally from White Watch showed the judges round and deserves huge credit for all his endeavours that make this garden so spectacular and appreciated by the community. Grimsby Crematorium with its planted gravelled areas, well maintained extensive lawns, topiary and lavender beds were looking very good. The large roundabout at Nuns Corner with newly installed sustainable planting looked very impressive even though it was fairly recently completed. The judges enjoyed the College Beds, which are maintained on a council contract. Mark, a member of staff representing the council, explained how apprentices had been heavily involved with designing and planting of these beds, with mixed Petunias and Begonias as the main theme. Overall some 6,500 plants were used in the display. Plants are changed seasonally, with Primulas recycled via Grimsby in Bloom for use elsewhere. As the tour progressed, the judges could see the lovely Minster Barrier Baskets and the display of pink roses in the 'Traffic Light' beds supporting the Pink Rose Appeal for breast cancer awareness.

Section B - Environment

The wildflower area created at Peak Lane Fire Station was a clever way of making use of an unkempt area of land. It was looking very good and a lovely contrast to the more formal garden across the road. The tribute to Firemen who had lost their lives in the line of duty was a lovely and poignant memorial. At Jubilee Woods, the judges were met by Rachel Graham (Ecology Officer) who explained the importance of this site with its Blow Holes, trees, wildflower / grasses etc. At approximately five hectares it is fully accessible to all and it is quite an oasis in this built-up area of Grimsby. It was interesting to meet James Trowsdale at Garth Lane Bridge and hear about all the future plans developing around the Town Centre and Alexander Dock. When completed future judges coming to Grimsby will have real treat awaiting them. It was a pleasure to meet and speak with James Elliott, a former car salesman who since being furloughed and then made redundant during the Covid pandemic has taken it upon himself to spend time in his canoe removing debris and detritus from the River Freshney. This helps to ensure flora and fauna thrive and the river remains healthy and an asset to Grimsby. He hopes to inspire others and has recently set up a Freshney Comrades initiative on social media to encourage other people to help keep the river banks litter-free. After the tour the judges had the opportunity to listen to Sharon Hunt of NEWLINCS Development regarding Green Waste Management and general recycling. They have a number of innovative ideas for recycling which includes the local community having the opportunity to purchase recycled / repaired items direct from the Waste Management Centre. Their Windrow Compost is donated to charities. The NEWLINCS team are keen to make their waste site attractive for the public and enjoy creating amusing year-round attractions from cast-offs, including Santa's, Smurfs, and characters on a Jubilee theme!

Section C - Community

It was good to see that some businesses were supporting the Bloom efforts. Yarborough Hotel had over 15 hanging baskets as well as a couple of planters. Colourful planters could be seen at Freshney Place. These are supplied and maintained by the shopping centre itself. It was good to have the opportunity to meet with the Press at Peak Lane Fire Station where judges were filmed and interviewed for a 15-minute Facebook Live feature on Grimsby Live. The informative portfolio also outlined the support given by the Grimsby Telegraph, Lincs FM and Radio Humberside. The Pavilion Cafe is an amazing drop-in centre for the local community. There are workshops on site where volunteers and the community can learn new skills and get experience using all manner of tools. Two clubs run as part of an early intervention initiative with the police. Youngsters attending have made a variety of items to decorate The Pavilion garden, including an impressive bug hotel, butterflies, fish and Cola the Caterpillar. At the end of the tour the judges met the Mayor, Cllr. Steve Beasant, who is a keen supporter and ambassador of all things 'in Bloom' including through his longstanding hands-on work at Buffalo Bill's Pocket Park.

Areas for Development

Section A

The Rose Beds at The Duke of York Gardens have been looking rather 'sorry' for some time now. If future tours are to include this area again, they need to be looked at sooner rather than later. Consider including a couple of IYN entries on future tours. It was disappointing not to see more of the Town Centre on the tour. The judge's heard a lot about Buffalo Bill's Pocket Park, consider adding this facility to the tour in future years. Consider visiting St. Andrew's Hospice so the judges can see the work carried out by volunteer gardeners.

Section B

In the portfolio there are strong links to Grimsby's heritage, however other than at Alexander Dock / Heritage Centre (Fishing) the judges felt that more could have been said about or shown through Grimsby's many sculptures - modern and ancient. Interpretation boards are needed in several places, including Jubilee Woods and Alexander Dock. Consider including a visit to an allotment as part of a future tour. Try to ensure that the route selected is fit for purpose and that everything the judges view is worthy of a mention.

Section C

Whilst we read a lot about Evie Rose in the portfolio and all the good work she has done for the community it would have been nice for the judges to have met her and hear about some of the up-to-date projects she is involved in. Consider visiting a school which would enable the judges to speak to the next generation of gardeners in developing Grimsby's landscape. Continue to develop partnership working, in particular with local businesses.

Marks Awarded

A : 33 B: 26 C: 26 Total 85



SMALL CITY CATEGORY

Oadby and Wigston – Pride of the Borough

Level of Award: GOLD

Judged on 13th July 2022

Judges: Richard Stephen and Julie Walker

Judges Award: For the inspirational garden at the MHA's Aigburth residential and dementia care home in Oadby.

Introduction

Oadby and Wigston's judging tour showed off three town centres, a formal park, a country park, an allotment, a botanic garden and lots of community gardening. The overriding impression is of a strong partnership between Pride of the Borough and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Well done to this dedicated team including an army of volunteers and local businesses who are proud to pull together to make this borough a friendly, green and clean place to live and work.

Areas of Achievement

Section A – Horticulture

The tour began at the Peace Memorial Park, one of the borough's two Green Flag sites, where the traditional carpet bed this year celebrates the Bowls Club. It was good to hear from the council about a renewed focus on raising the standard of horticulture and the employment of an apprentice this year. En route the judges saw an attractive range of planters including several sustainable ones, some maintained by businesses such as Epic Accessories and a local fish bar. Hanging baskets were also impressive, including some in Wigston Magna town centre provided for shops by the council. eg Sun City and Mrs. T Pastry. Pubs including The Lord Keeper of the Great Seal and the William Wygston (both Wetherspools) provide their own thriving floral displays. Hanging Basket contributions were also evident at the Congregational Chapel and the Tree House Cafe. Three planters funded through the loyalty card scheme are a joint initiative, with the council providing and maintaining the upper displays and POTB the lower ones. Some very good colourful barrier baskets could be seen along London Road. The bright entrance bed at Nova Laboratories provides a colourful sight for passers-by and a welcome for visitors and staff.

The judges enjoyed visiting South Wigston Community Garden where Julie and Judy outlined the work that had been going on over the last 12 months. This included regular litter picks, fruit trees, shrubs and bulb planting.

At the Sensory Garden – Reflection Park – Jean South is improving planting both for pollinators and colour, with, for instance, Geranium Rozanne, Cosmos and Geums.

Some nice residential gardens were seen on Gloucester Crescent MHA's Aigburth residential and dementia care home in Oadby is a beautiful and inspirational site full of interest, scent

and colour. When the judges visited, one of the residents was enjoying her 101st birthday in the garden with fish and chips and a glass of bubbly. Other residents are inspired to 'sing their way around the garden!' Marilyn Bowles started gardening at the site four years ago when her aunt was a resident; she now has a team of seven volunteers who together achieved an IYN Level 5 at their first attempt. There are some novel ideas including recycling saris across a pergola to create shade, sensory display tables and lots of art. A grant of £100 from POTB enabled the gardeners to learn hedge laying skills. Cut flowers from the garden, especially scented ones, are used for activities at a residents' garden club. The volunteer gardeners produce 50% of their plants from seeds and cuttings. The University of Leicester has recently been given the Freedom of the Borough and the judges were pleased to witness the planting of a commemorative Acer during their visit to the renowned Botanic Garden, which is open for the whole community to enjoy. The garden hosts 10,000 schoolchildren every year and inspires activities across the curriculum. Garden volunteers meet fortnightly, and the Friends of the Gardens run activities and events including an Indian dancing afternoon. As the judges were guided through the grounds it was obvious that the various 'sections' were looking good and that visitors were enjoying the experience as much as the judges were.

Section B – Environment

It was great to hear from Borough Chief Executive Anne Court about recognition of the natural environment in offering people opportunities to get physically fit and to improve their mental health. A health and wellbeing programme including a green social prescribing project has been running since the spring. Oadby and Wigston shares a Climate Change Officer (Chris Harrison) with Melton Borough Council, leading to an environmental strategy and action plan. A bid has been made for grant funding for electric vehicle charging points, accessing funding for litter bins in the town centres and delivering air quality monitoring. A full-time Arboriculture Officer and a full-time Park Ranger are employed, unusually for a borough of this size. The judges were pleased to hear from arboriculture Officer Michael Benetto that 700 trees were given out to residents as part of a 'free trees' scheme. Other tree planting includes Japanese Sakura cherry trees in local parks as part of a year of friendship; Scouts planting 15 trees to mark the Platinum Jubilee, and the Lions planting a coppice of 100 trees. The local authority treescape scheme for tree planting out of woodland areas has provided 40 full-size trees and 1,200 whips in parks. POTB volunteers have planted 85,000 bulbs since 2014. Ten planters purchased with funds from the POTB membership scheme have been made more sustainable this year, and local businesses are helping to maintain them. For example, planters at Parklands Leisure Centre and Two Steeples Medical Centre are planted with herbs. Others include shrubs and perennials, many wildlife-friendly and grown in peat-free compost. Thirty volunteers around the borough have POTB litter-picking equipment and litter pick around the neighbourhoods. South Wigston Community Garden picks up litter in Blaby Road Park, and South Leicester Litter Wombles are also very active across the borough. The Trade Association and Oadby Rotary Club champion a 'plastic-free' initiative and are working with suppliers that use less packaging. They have produced a leaflet for every household and hold stalls at events to try to get the message across. Brocks Hill Country Park is a Green Flag site with a range of habitats including woodland, meadows, ponds and community orchard, all with accessible paths. There are sculptures and interpretation boards provided by the Friends group. Park Ranger Eleanor Pratt gave an informative tour, telling the judges about working with the Wednesday conservation volunteers and a 'Let's Grow' group on Thursdays open to all. The community orchard with ten local varieties is accessible to all who want to pick the fruit.

The wildflower meadow is becoming more established. More native trees have been planted this year, including 70 planted by the Lions to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Eight schools have enjoyed pond dipping expeditions to Brocks Hill. They have over a period of time installed 18 bird boxes and 11 bat boxes. Visitors can enjoy the adventure play area, outdoor theatre and den corner as well as just exploring the 65 acres. Visitors to Aylestone Lane Allotments are greeted by a colourful garden developed by Julie Barnes, featuring a pond with newts and frogs and a bug hotel. Everyone across the site is encouraged to collect rainwater; mulch from local tree work is available to all; and there is a metal collection point. There's also a communal polytunnel. Peat-free compost is stocked in the site shop, and excess produce is shared with local charities. There is also an area set aside as a community allotment with willow arches, polytunnels and the obligatory 'tea hut'. Heritage aspects of the borough were highlighted with talks at the start of the tour. After a warm welcome from the Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Jeffrey Kaufman, the judges were given very interesting presentations from Chris Huscroft (Wigston Framework Knitters Museum) and Colin Robertson (Wigston Pinfold). It was good to hear about the large garden at the Framework Knitters Museum maintained in the style of a higgledy piggledy Victorian walled garden and replanted over a two-year period and including a fruit cage made of bamboo canes. Peppercorn rent takes the form of a pair of socks knitted on the loom each year. The links to Oadby and Wigston's railway heritage could be seen by the entrance to Blaby Park. Throughout the tour judges viewed a range of sculptures, in locations such as the Reflection Park, the University Botanical Gardens, Peace Memorial Park, Blaby Road Park, Wickham Road Green and on roundabouts.

Section C – Community

Every third Saturday of the month POTB parachutes in with a working party wherever the need is most pressing. In the past year the group has spent 168 man-hours gardening in parks and collecting 70 bags of litter. There are many community groups busily keeping their own areas beautiful. For instance, at Wickham Road Green residents regularly tend flowerbeds, carry out weeding, deadheading and pruning, and donate plants and cuttings from their own gardens. Student Amreeta is working on the Green for six months for the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. A local tree surgeon donated mulch – helping to reduce weeds and retain soil moisture. A special event was held for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. South Wigston Community Garden at Blaby Road Park was visited by Alan Titchmarsh after volunteers nominated project leader Julie Richards for a slot on 'Love your Garden.' The community garden offers year-round opportunities for a local Further Education college and students with disabilities to help in the garden. The biscuit factory next door donated money to buy Quince, Russet apple and Conference pear trees. Raised beds are planned. For the Jubilee, a local knitting group made bunting for the railings. A scrapbook put together by 'Miss Julie' showed year-round activities. The useful portfolio includes many contributions from volunteers and introduced the judges to other projects. For instance, Oadby and Wigston Lions Club have transformed the frontage of Wigston Police and Fire Stations into a memorial garden for officers who lost their lives. A row of trees was donated by Raj Aggarwal of Queen's Drive Stores who sadly died of Covid before the work was completed. The Oasis Community Garden at Oadby Baptist Church has seen a rectangular space transformed into 'A Place to Grow' for church and community groups. There are seven raised beds filled with peat-free compost and many groups, young and old, are getting involved. Volunteers at the Framework Knitters Museum have recruited three new members this year, one aged 18. Rebranded as 'The Secret Garden' it opened for the NGS again this year, after attracting 240 visitors over two weekends last year. Tea and plant sales

are a good source of income. A Christmas wreath making session was a success and it is hoped to repeat it this year. The POTB membership and loyalty card is recovering well after the pandemic and several new businesses have joined. It is good to see that three of the four main roundabouts are sponsored this year. A Green Spaces Bingo Card has been introduced in conjunction with Active Oadby and Wigston. Throughout the tour the judges were discreetly followed by Molly from the borough's Press office. While the judges were having a well-earned rest on one of the Botanical Garden benches Rob Helliwell, Communications and Marketing Manager, outlined how social media, Radio Leicester and the Leicester Mercury are used to engage with the wider public.

Areas for Development

Section A

Barrier troughs and planters are lovely from a distance; consider stopping to let the judges see them close-up and enable them to take photos and to assess the quality of the display. It is always good to vary the judges' tour from time to time, however it would have been nice to see more of the town centre.

Section B

Judges were told a lot about the heritage but would have loved to have seen some more aspects particularly the Framework Knitters Garden. Some graffiti was spotted and watch out for weeds in the gutters. Consider in future years whether it would be worthwhile visiting church grounds / cemetery / crematorium.

Section C

This is very much a community-led entry and it's fantastic to see so much enthusiasm. It would be good to see increased efforts to interest and involve young people. Judges were pleased to hear that POTB has started working with Waterleys Primary School developing the small school garden. Consider including this on a future tour.

Marks Awarded

A: 35 B: 27 C: 27 Total 89



SMALL CITY

Loughborough

Level of Award GOLD

Judged on 6th July 2022

Judge: Richard Stephen & Julie Walker

Judges Award: For Forest Road Green Belt including the new sculpture, in memory of Harry Cook

On a dry and pleasantly cool morning, the judges were given a warm welcome at The Outwoods ancient woodland by Sarah Ritchie from Charnwood Borough Council along with Pat Cook, Chairman of Loughborough in Bloom, Nicola Clarke from idverde and representatives from partners and volunteers who are significantly involved in the Bloom entry. The memorable tour took in the city centre, Queen's Park, Forest Road Green Belt and the University grounds to mention only a few. Prior to the tour commencing, all were treated to one of Olivia's café's famous cinnamon buns!!! Another reason to make a return visit to the superb Outwoods facility. Well done, Loughborough - another outstanding entry.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The floral displays across the borough were looking very good this year and in particular the city centre (400 sustainable baskets, 30 barrier baskets and five tree towers). Caz from Loughborough University escorted the judges around the three main University Gardens (Memorial, Prairie and Walled Garden) and gave an insight into their maintenance and use by students and staff across the campus. Queen's Park was looking good with its many trees, shrubs and herbaceous borders along with the vibrant hanging baskets and troughs adorning the bandstand. The stream and lake are enjoyed by visitors and wildlife alike. The Green Gym Allotment was invaluable during the pandemic, growing mountains of veg for the social supermarket based at John Storer House, where the cottage garden adjacent to a very busy main road was looking as good as ever. Pat Cook created a beautiful front garden display at 154 Forest Road which is a delight for passing drivers. Ashley Road roundabout was particularly attractive with its 16 colourful planters. The tour also included a visit to Ronald West Court where the judges viewed individual gardens created by the residents.

Section B

At The Outwoods, an SSSI Ancient Woodland of 110 acres, ranger Cat gave the judges a whistlestop tour of the site pointing out aspects of interest along the way, including a seasonal sculpture trail. The Outwoods features various activities of note including charcoal burning, sites of ancient fossils and the newly opened Olivia's Cafe. Wildflower and wildlife areas along the Forest Road Green Belt continue to develop and be a real asset for the community. The bird boxes and bug hotels adjacent to the stream are helping it to develop into a lovely wildlife haven which is enjoyed by all ages. The new sculpture has been

beautifully carved and is a fitting memorial to Harry Cook who worked tirelessly (with his wife Pat) to improve the local environment. Stonebow Washlands natural grasslands and local wildlife site is being managed effectively through partnership working involving the RSPB, Stonebow Washlands Group and Charnwood Borough Council. Judges had the opportunity to enjoy many sculptures at various locations along the way including The Outwoods, Forest Road Green Belt, Queen's Park (Songster the War Horse) and the University Grounds. There was evidence of reducing water waste: all hanging baskets have a water reservoir in order to reduce the number of watering visits, and where possible many community groups and allotment sites have water butts to gather water in an environmentally friendly way. Throughout the tour there was little evidence of litter, graffiti and other detritus. The 'Cleaner Greener' campaign seems to be working well.

Section C

Prior to the tour commencing Sarah Ritchie gave an informative presentation to the judges outlining activities over the last year in Loughborough. It was good to see Charnwood's Mayor, Cllr. Jennifer Tillotson, during the tour. The Mayor is passionate about improving Loughborough's community and environmental credentials. During the walking tour of the city centre, Sylvia Wright (Head of Leisure and Culture) and Ioni Ashford (BID Ambassador) gave the judges a detailed insight into how the businesses work in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council through their sponsorship / provision of 21 sustainable hanging baskets and tree towers. The planned development of Devonshire Square (new road layout, upmarket paving, street furniture and planters) intends to give the square a fresher, greener more welcoming appearance. The proposed 'Living Wall' will certainly give the area a 'wow' factor. The judges met students from Loughborough University who provided an insight to what the 'Landscaping and Gardening Society' (LAGS) undertake throughout the year and how they recruit more gardeners through their 'Freshers Bazaar.' More recently they have been working closely on a food project with Fearon Hall. Chris from Hardwick House School outlined the activities the pupils get involved in and how they increase learning skills through wildlife, vegetable growing and the Forest School concept. Video swaps with a school in Denver, Colorado, were inspirational. There appears to be a thriving IYN community across the borough.

Areas for Development

Section A

Generally Queen's Park was looking very good, however the Olympic Ring flower beds were not looking their best. This is a difficult site with much tree cover. Perhaps you could consider remodelling / redesigning the beds to ensure these busy entrance beds have the same quality of planting as other areas in the park. The judges enjoyed visiting the individual gardens in the University Campus, however on future visits perhaps time could be allocated to visiting the garden created and maintained by the students.

Section B

Throughout the tour, there was a strong emphasis on biodiversity, sustainability and wildlife and wildflower conservation. However the judges felt that more could have been made of Loughborough's heritage. The visit to the museum was interesting but the judges would have welcomed seeing other heritage aspects e.g. the Ladybird Book Benches in Queen's Park.

Section C

Judges look forward to seeing the completed Devonshire Square project along with the new planters and 'Living Wall.' Over the years, as a result of the good working relationships between the BID, Charnwood Borough Council, idverde and the local businesses, the BID has been quite a success story for Loughborough. Consideration should be given to entering East Midlands in Bloom's 'BID' category. To continue moving forward Loughborough in Bloom should consider introducing alternative community and IYN projects to the judges, whilst being careful not to overload the itinerary.

Scores A : 36 B : 27 C : 28 Total 91



SMALL CITY CATEGORY

Chesterfield

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 8th July 2022

Judges: Richard Stephen and Julie Walker

Judges Award: For the new Dementia Awareness Garden in the town centre - an attractive and educational resource for the whole community.

Introduction

Chesterfield presented an enjoyable and well-rounded tour with a real emphasis on quality. From the unique heritage of the beautiful Queen's Park cricket pitch to the picture-perfect rose gardens at the Crematorium, the excellent new Dementia Awareness Garden in the town centre, immaculate allotments, and the exceptional raised beds and mural at Edinburgh Road pocket park, everything was on top form. The judges were pleased to see so many enthusiastic Civic representatives supporting this well-organised, high-profile yet relaxed Bloom judging day.

Areas of Achievement

Section A - Horticulture

No one visiting Chesterfield town centre could miss the summer flowers - 40 hanging baskets, 16 wrap-around baskets, 12 barrier troughs and 17 floral fountains. Pubs passed en route were also joining in with their own impressive floral displays, notably the Barley Mow, Britannia Inn, Butcher's Arms and The Market. Pavements Shopping Centre sponsored two new floral towers and are also watering them. Floral displays round the early 19th Century pump were planted this year by the Bloom committee and look excellent in Platinum Jubilee shades of purple and silver – including Nemesia, Bacopa, Petunias and Cineraria. Elsewhere in the town centre, the Shambles blooms with hanging baskets and floral towers. The new Dementia Awareness Garden spearheaded by former Borough Chief Executive David Shaw is an excellent way to highlight the early signs of dementia and how to get support. The judges were invited to formally open these gardens on behalf of Chesterfield residents. The garden brings exciting new life to the site of an old garden and is an effective partnership project, created with £3,000 from the council, £200 from individual fundraising and £500 from Dementia Friendly Chesterfield. The Chesterfield Care Group were consulted about the planting and brought members to meet the judges. They have already made bird boxes for the site and plan to run activities in the garden. The judges look forward to seeing the newly-planted Clematis and Passionflower climbing the pergola next year. Other bright and sensory planting is complemented by a dozen metal forget-me-nots supporting an appeal by Ashgate Hospice. Enforcement officers are making regular patrols of the site to deter antisocial behaviour. Queen's Park is as usual a well-maintained green and pleasant place to be, with reputedly one of the prettiest cricket pitches in England. The Healthy Friends of Edinburgh Road, led by James Green, are enjoying their magnificent, raised beds, now in

their second season and looking glorious, with Lavender, Hemerocallis, Hardy Geraniums, Kniphofia, Spiraea and waving stems of Verbena bonariensis complementing the many grasses. The mural commissioned from local urban artist Peter Barber is the perfect backdrop. Brimington Circle raised beds, adjacent to an extremely busy road, are also looking good, watered when necessary by Estate Motors, the car showroom next door! The traditional memorial rose gardens at the Crematorium were in excellent condition. Judges were also very impressed with Hunloke Allotments – particularly the standard of the mown grass paths. Judges were told that 40,000 bulbs were planted in the autumn with the help of schoolchildren, friends groups and other community groups. An arrangement to procure bedding alongside three other councils is working well.

Section B - Environment

History and heritage links were strong from the outset of the tour, with the judges invited to ring the famous bell on the cricket pavilion balcony. On arrival at the Grade 2 Listed Historical Old Pump in the Market Place, the Mayor and the judging party were serenaded by Shirley Niblock, Secretary of the Bloom Committee, singing about Chesterfield's proud heritage. Just across from the Old Pump is the Shambles (which includes the oldest pub in Chesterfield, the Royal Oak) with its information / interpretation boards providing visitors with an insight into Chesterfield's history. The tour took in many residential areas as well as the town centre and a number of busy roads including the roundabout at the Toyota Garage which has recently been redeveloped with sustainable planting. The whole route was very clean, and no problems were spotted with graffiti or dog fouling. A relaxed mowing regime has been introduced across many sites, with interpretation to explain its benefits to the public. There are a range of Pictorial Meadows, including in front of the Town Hall, raised beds in the town centre, a traffic island at the entrance to Holme Brook Valley Park, Edinburgh Road and at the edge of Queen's Park. West Bars roundabout with its sustainable planting was looking particularly good this year. It was noted that Chesterfield has Green Flags awarded to four of its parks. At the beautiful 220-acre Holme Brook Valley Park, work is underway in partnership with the Don Catchment River Trust to clear an area of the Holmebrook River to address flooding. Funding is being sought for interpretation panels. The site benefits from work visits from litter picking volunteers, a part of the wider Litter-Free Chesterfield initiative. Currently one of Chesterfield's best kept secrets is the wonderful, but still developing, three- hectare wildflower meadow. There is public access, but currently few people know about it. The Crematorium woodland walk is a new option for the scattering of ashes and is well illustrated with an interpretation panel at the entrance. Consideration has been given to many aspects of biodiversity and the environment. There are bird boxes at the Dementia Awareness Garden; water butts on all the sheds at Hunloke Allotments; hanging baskets have reservoirs to reduce water use; sustainable planting features on roundabouts; all bedding plants are grown in peat-free compost, and there is ongoing work with the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust. It was noted by the judges that Chesterfield bulk purchases plant stock on behalf of Bolsover, Darley Dale and North East Derbyshire District Council. The Portfolio provided excellent information about the Borough's Waste Management and Recycling regimes.

Section C - Community

The excellent introductory presentation and the well-planned tour demonstrated how Chesterfield continues to build on a new interest in the outdoors established during the Covid lockdowns. The portfolio for the judges gave information clearly and concisely and included a useful round-up of activities throughout the year. Civic pride in the borough was

very apparent, along with the significance of the Bloom agenda to wider issues. The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Jill Mannion Brunt, is clearly a strong advocate for Chesterfield in Bloom. The judges were also delighted to meet the Mayor, Councillor Tony Rogers; the Council Leader, Councillor Tricia Gilby; the Chief Executive, Huw Bowen, and many of the borough's councillors, who are committed to Bloom activities. The profile of Chesterfield in Bloom is sky high. Posters were seen throughout the town centre, and there was even a visit from stilt-walking Gerry the Gerbera and Bob the Butterfly, engaging public attention. Photographers from local Press and Media hopefully caught the judges looking their best! Our tour leader, John Ramsay, was tweeting photos during the tour. A children's painting competition was hotly contested, with 1,550 entries, and the winning designs were displayed on banners outside the Town Hall thanks to sponsorship from Banner Box. There was also a wheelbarrow competition for secondary schools, a garden competition with 14 classes, and an allotments competition with 13 sites entering.

Areas for Development

Section A

The judges glimpsed smart new permanent landscaping near Salter Gate Car Park. It would have been beneficial to make a stop at this site, as judges are always looking out for permanent landscaping schemes that might be considered for a regional award. At the Crematorium, consider adding some summer colour to the Azalea bed, which looks disappointingly empty at this time of year, in stark comparison with the rose beds. In some of the rose beds at the Crematorium consider introducing some under-planting so that the beds don't look so empty during the winter months.

Section B

The town was generally spotless, including the town centre and residential areas, with the exception of an overlooked gutter in Soresby Street. Consider how best you can start promoting the wildflower area in Holme Brook Valley Park and also manage the public access and interpretation of the site. Consider exploring some sort of partnership with your local beekeeping organisations.

Section C

The wheelbarrow competition is a great idea – we suggest you get more entries next year. Continue to engage local businesses in order to gain further support for your bloom campaign through sponsorship or the development of their own floral contributions. With so much residential building development taking place, consider how you might include some of these completed developments in your future Bloom campaigns / judging tour. Consider trying to arrange for the judges to meet some children (school or out-of-school project) along the way so that the judges can get a first-hand view of their contributions. Otherwise, just keep up the good work!

Marks Awarded

A: 36 B: 28 C: 28 Total 92

SCHOOL COMPETITION



Firbeck Academy
Wollaton
Nottingham

Dear Cheryl and Chris,

Thank you for meeting me and showing me around for the EMIB judging visit. I was most impressed by all the hard work that has gone into establishing your site from the overgrown area of brambles I saw in the pictures - a great record of your achievements to date. The work that has gone into moving the soil and creating the raised beds as well as the fencing with community support it's commendable and I'm looking forward to visiting again and seeing the progress that I'm confident you will have made.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

<u>SECTION 1</u> Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.			*		
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.			*		
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.	*				
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.	*				
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.		*			
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.	*				
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.	*				
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.		*			

<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered		*			
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved		*			
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign			*		
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach			*		
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.		*			
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community	*				

<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.		*			
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.		*			
Examples of features for wildlife		*			
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.		*			
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils		*			
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.		*			

<u>SECTION 4</u> <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
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Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.		*			
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care			*		
Quality of food grown is evident.	*				
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .	*				
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year	*				
<u>SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)			*		
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.		*			
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year	*				
Holiday maintenance plans in place.	*				
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events	*				
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.	*				

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>

9	12	12	8	9	50
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SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : Bronze

Judge's Discretionary Award:

To Mr Chris Tye for his amazing effort transforming an overgrown and neglected part of the school grounds into somewhere that will be a special learning area for the whole school. He should be very proud of the learning opportunities that he has helped to create for many children.

Judge's Overall Comments:

This area of the school grounds in its' previous condition was of no value. The work to change it to the current state is an excellent example of a vision, community involvement [with supply of raw materials] and a lot of hard work. You've already done so much I am really looking forward to seeing how it progresses in future years. The opportunities for improvement have been made by the aforementioned hard work. The addition of more raised planted areas will be beneficial and the soil and potential composted material is available for that development. It will be great to see a range of fruit and vegetables in the area together with annual and perennial bedding as is possible realistically in the short to medium term. The use of the greenhouse and storage shed can be developed to help with the organisation and smooth running of the site. The explained fairly random nature of lunchtime visits by pupils because of their natural enthusiasm is great to hear - will there be plans for more structured visits during lesson time which will allow the garden area to become an increasingly significant part of the school's curriculum and probably the introduction of a gardening club? The garden in conjunction with the woodland area nearby will give great opportunities for outdoor learning and wildlife encouragement and recording. I realise that the ongoing work has limited the structured use of the beds but as they are included their structured use will be greatly beneficial towards pupil's understanding of food production, seasonality, and rotations. I will be interested to learn in the future of how the pupils have become involved in the layout, planting, as well as the care and maintenance of the site. Perhaps use by the wider school community might be possible in the future? For your future success in this competition as well as the successful incorporation of the garden into school life there are plenty of guidelines/suggestions within the EMIB Schools marking sheet at the beginning of this document. Congratulations on what you have achieved so far and good luck!

JUDGE (S): John Constable

DATE:23.06.22



Jasvinder Kang
Judgemeadows Community College
Marydene Drive, Evington
Leicester, LE5 6HP

Dear Jas,
I would like to thank you, Stuart and Zac for showing me round your garden. I was delighted to also meet Monty your therapy dog.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

SECTION 1 Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.					X
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.		X			
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.		X			
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.					X
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.		X			
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.		X			
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.		X			
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.		X			

SECTION 2 Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered					X
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgeably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved				X	
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign					X
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach					X
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time			X		

clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.				X	X
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community			X		

SECTION 3 Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.			X		
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.			X		
Examples of features for wildlife			X		
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.				X	
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils					X
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.	X				

SECTION 4 Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.				X	
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care		X	X		
Quality of food grown is evident.		X			
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .			X		
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year		X			

SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)			X		
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.		X			
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year			X		
Holiday maintenance plans in place.	X				
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events	X				
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.	X	X			

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
11	8	12	15	13	<u>59</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD :**Bronze****Judge's Overall Comments:**

The garden at Judgemeadows Community College is run through the Alternative Curriculum Education (ACE) Hub. This is a facility located in an old temporary classroom that is used for students who are having problem in the school, whether that is behavioural, social, or educational, and where they can come to get away from the problems they are experiencing for a short while. Pupils are referred to ACE Hub and go through a screening process and if ACE is deemed a suitable solution they are timetabled to attend ACE Hub, through the week. This facility was run for the garden initially but has now been extended to include beauty and nails for the girls, although some of the girls are also involved in the garden. Currently there are up to 22 students attending ACE each week. A breakfast club is run in the Hub twice a week and the students have built the kitchen from surplus equipment from around the school, although some cupboards were bought off eBay and funding provided to purchase a fridge, hob and microwave.

The outside of the front of the Hub is adorned with bird feeders and small solitary bee hotels all made by the students from recycled wood and a Welcome sign made by the girls from painted stones. The garden is located in a fenced off are behind the Hub and comprises raised beds made from wooden sleepers and others made from recycled pallets. One student, who was very close to being totally excluded from the school, dismantled, measured, cut and made all the fencing, from the wooden fence that was taken down around the area. The beds are filled with soil that comes from work projects around the school grounds, so not necessarily the best quality, but will be improved once their homemade compost is added.

The beds in the garden were full with onions, garlic, courgettes and potatoes, except for one bed that I think had an oilseed rape plant in it. There is a wheelbarrow that currently holds strawberries. There are two flowerbeds made by the students using timber from dismantled pallets, one bed that is planted with flowers and another smaller one that has sunflowers, but in the main it is a vegetable garden. The produce from the garden does not go to the kitchens in the school but is used by the students to make curries and the like in the kitchen at the Hub. So they are able to see the full cycle from seed, germination, planting out, to fruiting, harvesting and eating. It is a shame that more students do not get to see this but those that do, get a great deal of benefit from it and actually take ownership of what they do and take a great deal of pride in it. There is a large greenhouse that doubles as an indoor classroom so that the inside of the building does not get covered in compost etc. The plants in the greenhouse are all in relatively small pots and at the time I visited were looking somewhat limp through lack of water but they were good sturdy plants and will pick up well when watered and planted outside. Rainwater is collected from the roof in to relatively small water butts that have been purchased. There are plans to obtain an IBC and plumb it into a downpipe from the roof of the Hub building to increase available water. It may be worth considering trying to obtain recycled 80 gallon blue plastic tanks, not as pretty as the bought ones, but cheaper and larger capacity. Is it worth approaching the City council to see if they have some you could use?

The garden has three large compost bins made from old pallets, which is brilliant, but unfortunately they do need some work. These need their contents mixing so you do not get large slabs of slimy black grass, and they need to be kept moist. Waste from the home economics classes is occasionally collected and added to the compost. If this could be done regularly it would improve the makeup of the compost. Collecting shredded paper from the school office, if they will let you have it, to mix in with the grass cuttings will also help in the makeup. Torn up newspapers, egg boxes, toilet roll centres can also be added to improve the compost. The compost will provide the soil in the beds with much needed nutrients and improve the quality of it with the added organic matter. The grounds of the school has a large number of trees, several of which are adjacent to the garden, so in the autumn the leaves are collected and either added to the compost or kept separate and made into leaf mould.

I certainly look forward to coming back next year and seeing the changes that have occurred.

JUDGE: Malcolm Brown

DATE: 13 June 2022



King Edwin Primary
Edwinstowe,
Notts

Dear Mrs Fletcher

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for the time that you and colleagues spent with me explaining your plans and how children are taking advantage of existing facilities. The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

<u>SECTION 1</u> Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.	*				
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.		*			
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.	*				
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.	*				
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.		*			
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.					*
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.		*			
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.	*				

<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply

Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered	*				
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgeably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved	*				
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign	*				
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach			*		
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.		*			
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community	*				

<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.	*				
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.	*				
Examples of features for wildlife		*			
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.		*			
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils	*				
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.	*				

<u>SECTION 4</u> <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.	*				

Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care	*				
Quality of food grown is evident.	*				
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .	*				
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year	*				
<u>SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)	*				
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.	*				
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year	*				
Holiday maintenance plans in place.			*		
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events	*				
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.	*				

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
9	8	7	6	10	<u>40</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD: Certificate of Achievement
Judge's Overall Comments:

Your enthusiasm was very encouraging, and I do appreciate, as a primary school governor, some of the challenges schools face post pandemic and “Rome wasn’t built in a day”!

The containers positioned at the school entrance were attractive and well maintained as were the raised beds behind the classrooms - perhaps in future years they could be assigned to a specific classroom or your group close to where they are situated so that pupils could take responsibility and ownership for their day to day maintenance? The planted area to the top of the school field is an encouraging start, as is the raised bed within it. Perhaps a composting area could be established on site to help provide some of the needed organic matter? The free draining soil will provide a challenge to retain moisture but on other hand often can grow very good root vegetables! You did mention a gardening club - it would help if they could accompany a future judge’s visit. This would enable a future judge to confirm pupil involvement. The “Eco board” in the visitor reception was interesting and a good place to help highlight current achievements.

I could see that you had some significant development taking place on the school grounds when that is completed, I’m sure that will allow you to move forward and put some of your ideas into place. A nice pictorial record is always valuable for this type of thing and as mentioned before good evidence of pupil involvement in all aspects allows the judge to see evidence of activities which are not always possible to demonstrate during a single short visit - for example evidence of community involvement would be valuable.

When the previously mentioned work is completed, it will possibly allow further opportunities for wildlife and pupil involvement with its encouragement and monitoring. The establishing fruit and vegetable area can provide many opportunities for pupil involvement and their increasing understanding of food production probably connected to a wide range of curriculum areas.

With so much potential the involvement of pupils in the planning and development will provide many opportunities for personal development.

I was really impressed by the obvious use that school is making with the “forest” area - access to such areas will enhance educational experiences in many ways.

Good luck and I look forward to a visit in the future to see how you have progressed.

JUDGE (S):
John Constable

DATE:
23.06.22



Littlecoates Primary Academy
Harlow Street
Grimsby
DN31 2QX

Dear Neville Wilkinson,

Thank you for your warm welcome on 21st June 2022, when I visited to look around Littlecoates Primary Academy's school gardens and wildlife areas and find out about the exciting projects you are working on.

It was lovely to meet you, Jenny Hodson and the children on such a sunny summer's morning. I was pleased to talk with such polite and friendly children, representing most of the school's year groups. They enjoyed showing me their classes' raised beds, with their themed planting of an excellent range of fruit, vegetables and companion plants.

I am extremely impressed with the progress your school has already made with Vision 2025, started just two years ago during the very challenging Covid - 19 pandemic and very well presented in the school's In Bloom 2022 Portfolio.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

SECTION 1 Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo - ping	Goo d	Very Goo d	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.				*	
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.				*	
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.				*	
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.				*	
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.				*	
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.				*	
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.				*	

Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.		*			
<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered				*	
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved	*				
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign				*	
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach		*			
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.				*	
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community			*		
<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.		*			
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.				*	
Examples of features for wildlife			*		
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.			*		
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils			*		
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.		*			

<u>SECTION 4</u> <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.			*		
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care				*	
Quality of food grown is evident.			*		
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .				*	
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year			*		
<u>SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)			*		
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.				*	
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year				*	
Holiday maintenance plans in place.				*	
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events				*	
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.				*	

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
19	14	13	17	19	<u>82</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : Silver Gilt

Judge's Discretionary Award:

Vision 2025 acknowledges the local community's need for all the benefits of outdoor learning.

Judge's Overall Comments:

Areas of Achievement

All age groups and classes take part in gardening activities and use various outdoor spaces for learning across the curriculum.

The Gardening Club meets every week throughout the school year.

Vegetables and fruit from the school garden is provided free of charge to families through the Littlecoates Larder. This encourages healthy eating and increases knowledge and understanding of how and where food is produced.

Vision 2025 clearly sets out the school's ambitions for creating a forward thinking and sustainable school community, realising the potential for learning in the outdoor environment.

Areas for Development

Continue to develop the children's ability to communicate their knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm about their gardening and other outdoor activities. This is evident in their written reports in the Portfolio but less so when showing me their gardens. Include the children in tours of other areas in the school grounds, e.g. the woodland area, so that the judge hears from them about their learning activities. Continue to carry out the school's plans to develop the woodland and other wildlife areas.

JUDGE: Mrs Becky Mayfield

DATE: 21st June 2022



St John's CE Primary School and Nursery, Belper
 Laund Nook
 Belper
 Derbyshire
 DE56 1GY

Dear Miss Bennett, Abi and Esme (Y6), Rose, Ruby and Oliver (Y5) and Dillon (Y2),

Thank you very much for letting me visit your school during lunch time on Tuesday, 14th June. I am sorry that you had to wait with your lunch break so you could show me round your garden on this lovely sunny day. It is very nice to see that your school as a whole seems keen to develop your outdoor areas, with bedding flowers in containers and an allotment area for herbs and vegetables. Maybe in future the judging could be during class time so I could observe some actual gardening activities of the children? There is so much to be taken in by the judge, and we were very constrained by time. There is a lot of potential to develop your spaces more, with your school's nice surroundings, where there are lots of trees and well-kept gardens, and there is a park with a playground nearby. After the lockdown, it seems that both staff and pupils are more aware of the benefits of spending time outside gardening and looking after the wildlife, and it is very nice to see that you have started your gardening and joined the East Midlands in Bloom school competition.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

SECTION 1 Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.			x		
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.			x		
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.	x				
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.					x
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.			x		
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.		x			
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.		x			
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.		x			
SECTION 2 Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply

Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered			x		
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved			x		
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign					x
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach					x
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.		x			
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community			x		
SECTION 3 <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.					x
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.		x			
Examples of features for wildlife		x			
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.	x				
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils					x
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.					x
SECTION 4 <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.			x		
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care		x			
Quality of food grown is evident.			x		
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .		x			
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year					x
SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)		x			
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.		x			

Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year		x			
Holiday maintenance plans in place.					x
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events					x
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.		x			

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
11	9	9	12	9	<u>50</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : Bronze

Judge's Overall Comments:

Areas of Achievement

With the school just starting to develop their gardening and outdoor areas, it was very good to see that children of all year groups are involved in the work. The children I met were very enthusiastic, although the time they had to show me their work was very limited, as they had to have their lunchbreak, too, and I could not observe any actual gardening activities. All gardening seems to be integrated into the individual year group's curriculum, as specific projects. Year 6 were looking after all the container-grown bedding plants round the school; they had planted them and cared for them, watering them regularly. There was a range of recently planted flowers which should look very colourful in the next few weeks. Year 5 focused on raised beds and containers as part of their allotment project; the work was preceded by a visit to a local allotment where the children learned about herbs and vegetable growing. The variety of herbs was wide-ranging, and the plant quality of dill and coriander was particularly impressive. Herbs are also used by the school kitchen for the children's meals. Year 2 had grown sweet peas and runner beans from seed which they planted up along a sunny wall, sheltered from the wind; there was a nice marigold which found its way next to the runner beans, as an example of companion planting – from the flower trough nearby. There was evidence of wildlife encouragement through an insect hotel and some bird feeders. The gardening activities are supported by a specific budget for the leading member of staff in conjunction with some fundraising by the governors.

Areas for development

The school has quite a lot of green spaces with apple trees and other mature trees which could become part of a more systematic wildlife area for outdoor learning and risk-taking activities for all year groups – and these spaces could be partly shared by the nursery which is part of the school. There would also be some scope to grow fruit bushes; perhaps the link to the local allotment could be used to learn how to take cuttings from fruit bushes in autumn and plant them in the school garden. Growing potatoes in the ground or in raised beds could also be considered, especially some late varieties which could be harvested after the summer holidays. The apple harvest promises to be good, and it would be nice for the children to see how the apples can be used in the school kitchen for apple pies etc. There are so many buildings whose roofs could be easily used to harvest water for the gardening. Growing some sunflowers and other flowers for wildlife would be a good idea too.

With an expansion of the gardening area, a composting scheme would be necessary and could be used to learn more about sustainability; it would be ideal for all children to learn about the importance of using peat-free compost, while also saving money by producing compost for growing. Perhaps some of the planting activities could be used for fundraising? Maybe the children could be involved to think up ideas to raise money or swap plants at local community activities?

JUDGE (S): Martha Wörsching

DATE: 14th June 2022



The Market Bosworth School
Station Road,
Market Bosworth
CV13 0JT

Dear Anisa,

It was a pleasure to visit your delightful garden area set just off the main school corridor. In just one growing season you have created a wonderful serene space where pupils and staff can pause and relax. You have a small vegetable area and wildlife pond, bird feeders and boxes. You have plans to expand this area and would like to develop a wildflower area in the grounds and make the space a part of curriculum lessons in future.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

<u>SECTION 1</u> Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.	x				
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.		x			
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.	x				
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.		x			
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.					x
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.	x				
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.		x			
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.		x			

<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered					x
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgeably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved			x		
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign					x
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach					x
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.		x			
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community				x	

<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.	x				
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.	x				
Examples of features for wildlife			x		
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.		x			
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils	x				
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.	x				

<u>SECTION 4</u> <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
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Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.		x			
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care		x			
Quality of food grown is evident.			x		
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .	x				
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year	x				
<u>SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)		x			
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.		x			
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year	x				
Holiday maintenance plans in place.	x				
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events			x		
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.	x				

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>

9	9	11	14	13	<u>56</u>
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SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : Bronze

Judge's Overall Comments:

It was a pleasure to meet the staff (Anisa Fairbrother, Mrs. Wright and Mrs Holmes) and some of the pupils who have been involved in developing this formerly neglected courtyard space into a haven of tranquility. Work started during lockdown and the calming atmosphere of the garden was appreciated by some pupils who had to be at school while classmates were being home schooled and also benefits pupils who have experienced loss or difficulties. This challenging project was initiated by Miss Fairbrother who has no previous gardening experience, but knowledgeable advice has been offered by Bosworth in Bloom group and some of the pupils who already enjoy growing at home. Pupils can drop in to the garden during breaks or free time and I saw evidence of using the space for playing and practicing music, chatting and horticultural activities such as propagating plants by dividing and watering. Year 7 pupils currently have a timetabled wellbeing session which can take place in the garden, but all other garden activities are currently ad hoc. The small vegetable area has healthy looking crops and herbs and an impressive collection of tomatoes in a good size greenhouse. The planting is either pre-existing shrubs or donations and so again has not been planned. To date you have no ring fenced funding or sponsorship and we talked about some ways to do this. We talked about running a gardening club perhaps using volunteers from the community. You have not signed up to the RHS Schools Campaign and I would strongly recommend this as the website is full of ideas for activities and using your outdoor space in the school curriculum. The garden space can be used in art, creative writing, and science- in fact almost every subject as well as for supportive chats/counselling in a neutral space. There are grants and sponsorship available for developing school gardens eg and they would be worth looking into. My other suggestion is asking for financial support or help from parents who are often very keen to support environmentally friendly projects. You would need to manage this carefully but a specific request e.g. a camera for bird boxes would be ideal. Your garden space is new but there are several areas within the school grounds ideal for wild flower meadows. The school grounds are large and border woodland so installing bird or bat boxes and insect hotels would be a worthwhile project. This garden is still very much in development but what you have achieved already is commendable, and I feel sure that with more experience, time and planning it could easily be more impressive.

JUDGE : Liz Alun-Jones
22/06/22

DATE:



Ridgeway Primary Academy
The Ridgeway,
Market Harborough,
LE16 7HQ

Dear Georgie,

Thank you for showing me around your project. It was a pleasure to meet you, Judy and Sue and some of the children in your newly established gardening club. Your delightful planting and amazing use of local sponsors is particularly impressive. I think you have started a great project with a right future.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

<u>SECTION 1</u> Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.		x			
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.			x		
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.	x				
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.			x		
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.			x		
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.	x				
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.		x			
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.	x				

<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
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Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered					x
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgeably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved		x			
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign			x		
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach		x			
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.		x			
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community	x				

<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.	x				
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.		x			
Examples of features for wildlife		x			
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.	x				
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils		x			
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.	x				

<u>SECTION 4</u> <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.					x

Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care					x
Quality of food grown is evident.					x
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .					x
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year					x
<u>SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (Maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)		x			
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.			x		
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year	x				
Holiday maintenance plans in place.	x				
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events				x	
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.				x	

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
14	13	9	n/a	16	<u>52</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : Bronze

Judge's Discretionary Award:

Georgie Willock (staff) for her vision and amazing fundraising and publicity.

Judge's Overall Comments:

The Ridgeway Academy School garden is very new but a great deal of thought has gone into its planning and an impressive amount of support from parents and sponsors means it should be assured of a bright future!

JUDGE (S):
Liz Alun-Jones
2022

DATE: June 13th



BEST FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GARDEN

Mrs Hannah Boydon
Mayflower Primary School
Evington Drive
Leicester
LE2 3RL

Dear Hannah

I would like to thank you, Mrs. Mussa, Hannah Keys and all the children, Manha, Muhammad-Aatif, Marwa, Layla, Adam, Laith, Jeona, Ryan, Fatima, Farhana, Eesa and members of your Gardening Club for having me up to your allotment and showing me round.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

SECTION 1 Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.			X		
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.		X			
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.				X	
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.			X		
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.					X
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.		X			
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.			X		
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.		X			
SECTION 2 Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered	X			X X	
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved			X		
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign					X
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach					X

Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.			X	X	
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community				X	
SECTION 3 Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.			X		
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.					X
Examples of features for wildlife					X
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.					X
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils				X	
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.			X		
SECTION 4 Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.			X X		
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care		X		X X	
Quality of food grown is evident.			X		
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .				X	
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year			X		
SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)		X			
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.			X		
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year		X			
Holiday maintenance plans in place.		X			
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events					X
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.	X	X			

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
14	14	11	13	11	<u>63</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD :

SILVER

Judge's Overall Comments:

The allotment is run by Mrs Boydon with assistance from Mrs. Mussa and Hannah Keys from the Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust.

The garden at Mayflower Primary School is somewhat different from the gardens in the majority of schools, in that it is not within the school grounds and is on an allotment site about a kilometre and 10 minutes walk from the school. Having said that I know there is a garden at the school as I visited it in 2016. The two gardens are looked after by two different groups of students, the school garden by the Gardening Club from Years 3 & 4 and the allotment by the Green Influencers comprising students from Years 5 & 6. The members of the Green Influencers group are selected for the group and attend the allotment for 90 minutes every two weeks. They also help other students who maybe up on the plot by showing them how to plant seed, transplanting and watering and eventually harvesting what they have grown.

The allotment is surrounded on three sides by high wooden fences, one side of which was built by another local school group, who have the adjoining plot, from dismantled pallets, and on the road side by a low fence with a gate in, again built from dismantled pallets. The children have painted all the fences in muted colours, green blue and grey. The plot is in two halves, nearest the gate are the raised beds separated by paths made using wood chip and beyond them is a more wild area that has an real Anderson shelter in, the polytunnel and some seating and shaded areas for the students to relax in. On the left of the plot is a large circle of benches with half a cable drum in the centre where classes can be held. A bid was submitted to the Green Influencer Larger Project, run by the Ernest Cook Trust, in which they were successful and awarded nearly £5000, which paid for the large polytunnel and the wooden structures that are on the site. The polytunnel will make a very useful indoor classroom in addition to being able to bring on seedlings and grow plants that maybe need a protected environment, like peppers, cucumbers and tomatoes.

The school does not timetable the use of the allotment but has a relaxed approach to its use, in that staff and their classes can go there whenever they want to and stay there for as little or as long as they wish. Those students with special needs can be brought up to the allotment by their teaching assistant on an individual basis, as the need arises. One thing that I have not seen before in a school garden, is a large sand pit. Once we had finished having a chat and the children were free to wander, that's where the majority went. Very popular.

All the produce from the plot goes down to the school kitchen, if it doesn't get eaten first, where, by all accounts, the cook is very imaginative in getting the vegetables grown into the lunch menu and particularly the cakes.

Each Year has allocated raised beds and can plant in them what they will. The children decide what to grow and the seeds are planted in the classroom and brought up to the allotment at various stages. As a result the quality of the plants varies across beds, depending what has been sown and

when they were planted/transplanted. A recycled cast iron bath has been put to good use by the Green Influencers, growing carrots in it with marigolds as a companion plant.

The school is involved with a Natural Nations Erasmus project with schools from Italy and Malta and Sweden. As part of this, surveys were done to find out what mini beasts and plant species were present on the site. They have also had live interactive links with the other schools where each school involved had given a tour of their garden. On a similar vein, potato traps were put out on the raised beds to see what mini beasts were present there. I had never heard of a potato trap, and as they say, every day is a school day. Apparently it was a very limited range of bugs, ants and woodlice predominantly.

Water is collected off the roof of the sandpit into an IBC and from the polytunnel into a single relatively small commercial water butt. This is large garden and as there is no other water on your site, as much as possible needs to be collected from the available roofs, even the wood structures, if possible. I would suggest that further butts are obtained, maybe approaching the City council to see if they have any of the 80 gallon blue tanks that could be used. Maybe not as pretty, but cheaper (free?) if from the council. There are also some compost bins, the contents of which will improve the soil in the raised beds in due course. I think some work needs to be done with the contents of the bins to help the contents rot down, and if need be, I can come and offer some advice.

I was delighted to see your garden and very much look forward to coming again next year to see the changes that have been made.

JUDGE: Malcolm Brown

DATE: 23 June 2022



BEST WILDLIFE GARDEN

Long Field Spencer Academy
Ambleside Way
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE13 0BN

Dear Mr Haggett,

Thank you for making the arrangements for the judging visit and please pass on my thanks to Tabitha, Leigh, Ethan, Jack, Tally, Charlie, Lily, Lucas, Isla-Mae, Leigh and Kian (Head Gardener) for answering my questions and explaining about their growing activities. Also pass on my thanks to those gardeners who were sitting exams on the day of my visit but who have also contributed to the growing projects.

Given all the challenges of the last 2 years of lockdowns and restrictions it was wonderful to see how you had made great use of the outdoor spaces (for pupils and staff) and brought to fruition so many diverse growing and wildlife projects.

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

SECTION 1	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge					
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.				x	
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.				x	
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.			x		
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.				x	
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.				x	
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.			x		
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.				x	
Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.				x	

SECTION 2 <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered			x		
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgeably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved				x	
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign					x
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach				x	
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.				x	
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community				x	
SECTION 3 <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.		x			
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.				x	
Examples of features for wildlife				x	
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.				x	
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils				x	
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.				x	
SECTION 4 <u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.			x		
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care				x	
Quality of food grown is evident.			x		
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .				x	
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year			x		
SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance	Develo- ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)				x	

Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.				x	
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year				x	
Holiday maintenance plans in place.				x	
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events				x	
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.				x	

MARKS AWARDED

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
18	16	17	16	19	<u>86</u>

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : GOLD

Judge's Discretionary Award:

To Chris, the Head Teacher.

For his dedication, insight, motivation and desire to get so many children engaged in growing in so many ways. He has enabled such a scaling up of the growing and development of the school grounds and his passion is evident in the enthusiasm the children share with him for their care, understanding and hardwork.

Judge's Overall Comments:

I was very impressed with the scale and diversity of the 34 growing projects that have come to fruition at Long Field Academy despite lockdown and all the covid restrictions. A fabulous achievement. Your success in obtaining grants for the 14 planters and getting the polytunnel fit to use has enabled you to expand vegetable and flower growing opportunities for the pupils. In the next year this will enable you to develop rotational knowledge and skills and extend year-round growing. The newly planted orchard with apples, pears and a walnut tree will provide other opportunities as the trees begin to fruit. Getting every pupil to plant a tree around the perimeter of the grounds was a great way to involve gardeners and non-gardeners alike and 1000 trees planted is impressive. In a few years it will become an amazing extension to your nature reserve and will have an impact on the water management of an area that floods. The new woodland area closer to the school will also become a great teaching asset. The mini gardens around the reception area including the Marguerite Garden, Margaret's Garden, the Alien Garden, the wheelbarrows and recycled planters are colourful and alongside the cactus greenhouse show how varied gardening can be. They are a credit to the gardening club and the house gardening teams. It was good to see the inter house wheelbarrow competition create so many different gardens and be maintained by such a good number of pupils. The sunken sinks for herbs are a great complement to the vegetable planters and it was good to hear how they are used by the kitchens as well. You may want to consider how you can incorporate soft fruit growing into your edible growing plans. As a holder of the Food for Life Bronze Award the plan is to grow more vegetables for use in school which is commendable.

The schools collaboration with the Lincolnshire and Rutland Wildlife Trust has clearly been very helpful and the wildlife meadow is a credit to them. It was looking fabulous on the day of the visit and is clearly improving year on year. It was good to see nesting boxes adjacent to it. Streetwise, Melton in Bloom and the Soil Association have also helped the school alongside local parents, grandparents and such support is invaluable. What was lovely to see is the school giving back to the local community by offering to help with their gardens. The Head Gardener has been quite instrumental in this respect. The school has a great nature reserve area of old woodland, pond and stream and this is well used by the school in many curriculum areas especially science. It is also where the forest school is held for year 7 pupils and for the onsite nursery. This area is a very special habitat for wildlife, birds, amphibians, butterflies and moths. The school has plans to have a working beehive in the next year and now that the polytunnel is installed, grow hanging baskets for the local community. It awaits the delivery of new water butts. You face the challenge of maintaining all the diverse projects going forward as well as taking on new ones. With such extensive growing areas and in the light of climate change, the school may benefit from develop it's composting and rainwater harvesting. The school may wish to consider the RHS Schools Award as further recognition of the growing expertise it is developing. To further support the curriculum, you may wish to consider some of the national wildlife surveys with organisations like the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, the RSPB or similar.

JUDGE (S): **Joyce Slater**

DATE: 16.06.2022



BEST OVERALL SCHOOL GARDEN

Cambridge Park 6th Form Academy
419 Cromwell Road
Grimsby
DN37 9JR

Dear Kim

Thank you for your warm welcome on 21st June 2022, when I visited to look around Cambridge Park 6th Form Academy's garden and wildlife areas and find out about the exciting projects the students are working on.

It was lovely to meet you and your students as well as volunteers from Great Coates in Bloom on a lovely sunny summer afternoon. I enjoyed our tour of the Academy's garden and was very impressed to see and hear from the students about their gardening activities and achievements.

Thank you for the welcome tea and cake at the end of my visit!

The following shows where I consider you are doing really well and where you are looking to achieve more.

<u>SECTION 1</u> Gardening Activities, Skills and Knowledge	Develo - ping	Goo d	Very Goo d	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
All pupils are involved in the gardening and practical skills are built on for the pupils/ they understand the benefits of gardening.				*	
Activities that develop skills and knowledge are evident.				*	
Pupils plan and carry out all year round gardening /growing activities.				*	
Gardening club(s) /Eco teams with regular meetings.				*	
Raised beds/ pots/ hanging baskets or plots evident around the school grounds.				*	
Principals of rotation /timing and growing cycles/ seasonal planning is evident.				*	
Range of crops, annuals, perennials evident.				*	

Basic plant recognition/ knowledge / basic gardening terms are known and understood.				*	
<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>Gardens Contribution to Education and the Curriculum</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Classes held outdoors across age ranges imaginative use of gardening in curriculum and teaching a wide range of curriculum subjects covered				*	
Pupils talk enthusiastically / knowledgably about value of gardening/ plants/ projects/ activities in which they have been involved			*		
Pupils are participating in the RHS Schools Campaign				*	
Grounds are developed for use in Forest Schools / active outdoor learning / Bushcraft curriculum approach				*	
Pupils are outdoors using the grounds and/or garden regularly in curriculum time clubs each week the garden has a sustainable future.				*	
Pupils pass on gardening skills to others in school or the local community				*	
<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>Value in sustaining the environment and wildlife</u>	Develo - ping	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Effective composting and water collection.				*	
Planting to encourage wildlife into the school grounds.				*	
Examples of features for wildlife			*		
Presence of homes and habitats for range of wildlife.			*		
Evidence of wildlife observation by pupils			*		
Pupil knowledge of wildlife is evident and its part in gardening is developed.				*	
<u>SECTION 4</u>	Develo -	Good	Very	Excellent	Doesn't Apply

<u>Growing Fruit and Vegetables and Healthy Living</u>	ping		Good		
Pupil involvement and knowledge of growing food Evidence of a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs grown.				*	
Pupils practical skills to prepare the soil Plant appropriately (seeds/seedling/ plants) Watering with care				*	
Quality of food grown is evident.				*	
Making use of food produced through curriculum or wider use/ sales/ fundraising .				*	
Seasonal planning to harvest produce throughout the school year				*	
<u>SECTION 5 Design, Management and Maintenance</u>	Developing	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Doesn't Apply
Overall impression (maintenance, hard landscape features, plant quality.)				*	
Pupil involved in garden layout / displays / accessibility/ health and safety/ awareness of hazards in a garden.				*	
Care and maintenance by pupils ongoing throughout school year				*	
Holiday maintenance plans in place.				*	
Garden is shared or skills learnt with local community to help with projects or gardening needs/ or through open days/sales /events				*	
Money raised to buy seeds, plants and equipment for the garden Links to sponsorship and advice.				*	

Marks Awarded

<u>SECTION 1</u>	<u>SECTION 2</u>	<u>SECTION 3</u>	<u>SECTION 4</u>	<u>SECTION 5</u>	<u>TOTAL MARKS</u>
20	19	18	20	20	97

SCHOOL GARDEN AWARD : GOLD

Judge's Discretionary Award:

Weekly link with Great Coates in Bloom. Students walk to Great Cotes Village Hall and help with all the gardening activities undertaken by the Bloom group. Through this gardening link, valuable friendship and communication skills are developed.

Judge's Overall Comments:

Areas of Achievement

There is a holistic approach to all the outdoor and gardening activities. The students are learning all the skills they will need when they leave the Academy and enter workplaces. All the fruit and vegetables grown are used in the Academy's kitchen and the students' catering skills are developed as well as healthy eating habits being encouraged. All the construction of raised beds and other garden features is planned and carried out by the enthusiastic, hard working students. The creation of plant labels is carried out by the students using graphic design and computer skills.

Areas for Development

If possible next year, it would be beneficial to incorporate a visit to the Great Coates in Bloom garden to see what the students have accomplished there.

Otherwise, carry on doing what you're doing - it's wonderful!

JUDGE: Mrs Becky Mayfield
June 2022

DATE: 21st

FLORAL AWARDS

BEST RESIDENTIAL FRONT GARDEN- SPONSORED BY THE CONSTABLE FAMILY



Frank Constable MBE Best Front Garden

WINNER

27 Normanton Lane - Littleover

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 6th July 2022

Judge/s: Irene Bates/Liz Fairfield

1. Attractiveness of planting 28/30

A densely planted front garden mixing shrubs, trees, perennials, annuals and roses which spill out onto the street giving pleasure to the owner and passers-by alike with its colour and scent. Many shrubs are evergreen, and the monkey puzzle tree provides focus. A line of potted sedums under the living room window will be visible in winter.

2. Design 27/30

This sunny corner plot was used as a short cut by locals until Mrs Wheeler got permission to erect a fence, enabling her to make a planting scheme that delights all and looks as interesting from the street as it does from within the garden.

A nicely restored iron table displayed a number of pots containing aeoniums on the way into the garden.

3. Quality of Care and Maintenance 29/30

The garden was immaculately maintained, and well mulched. Plants and borders appeared pest and disease free.

4. Sustainability 9/10

In the summer heat the lawn was quite dry, and the judges were pleased to see that watering was confined to key plants. Rainwater was being harvested and compost was being made in the back garden. Crushed eggshells were used to deter slugs.

The flowers were chosen with pollinators in mind, and they clearly appreciated it.

Total Marks 93/100

FLORAL AWARDS

BEST PUB/HOTEL SUPPORTED BY THE ART DEPARTMENT (TAD) NOTTINGHAM



Best Pub/Hotel

WINNER

The Half Moon, 534 Burton Road, Littleover, Derby

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 6th July 2022

Judge/s: Irene Bates/Liz Fairfield

1. Attractiveness of planting 28/30

This thriving village local has glorious and eye-catching orange and yellow planted hanging baskets facing the main road. In the sunny secluded terraced garden behind is a mix of perennials and annuals with well-placed phormiums and small evergreen shrubs for structure. Sedums and sunflowers offer later summer colour. A rose in memory of Ben, chosen by the regulars, is a lovely touch.

2. Design 25/30

The design is inviting and the raised bed at the bottom of the terrace makes a nice transition between spaces. The low fences allow the space to 'borrow' mature trees from surrounding gardens. The right-hand perennial border is still being developed; the left-hand side is planted with cheerful annuals, some in unusual re-purposed containers such as drum cases.

3. Quality of Care and Maintenance 26/30

The plants were healthy, well-watered and maintained. There was no evidence of pests or diseases – the hostas in particular, were in excellent condition.

4. Sustainability 6/10

Our guide wasn't sure what type of compost was being used. It was not clear whether any rainwater was being harvested or composting was taking place. The hanging baskets were using an automatic watering system.

Total Marks 85/100

FLORAL AWARDS

BEST BUSINESS/RETAIL SUPPORTED BY THE ART DEPARTMENT (TAD) NOTTINGHAM



Best Retail/Commercial

Winner

Vine House Farm Shop and Café – Deeping St Nicholas

Level of Award: Gold

Judged on 5th July 2022

Judge/s: John Constable/Liz Alun-Jones

1. Attractiveness of planting 27/30

An outstanding wildflower meadow with a wildlife pond which was created in 2021. In full bloom when judged. Native trees have been planted for all year interest, willow structures for adventure and a vegetable patch. The pond has an attractive house inhabited by a family of moorhens.

2. Design 28/30

Perfectly suited to the purpose and location. Visitors to the farm shop and café can enjoy the constantly changing view through the meadow to open countryside. Educational and fun information boards are in place.

3. Quality of Care and Maintenance 27/30

Carefully mown paths allow easy access.

4. Sustainability 10/10

Careful attention to environmental responsibility and sustainability from start to finish.

Total marks 92/100

In Bloom Group	Loughborough in Bloom		
Contact name:	Pat Cook		
Address of display:	Forest Green Belt	Post Code:	LE11 3HU
Number of photos attached (max 4)	4	Date:	6 th June 2022

Please describe the bulb planting scheme (*max 100 words*)

Forest Road Green Belt is an area of public open space adjacent to one of the main roads into town. For years it received minimum maintenance until 2014, local resident Harry Cook recognised its potential and began planting large numbers of bulbs, plants & Wildflowers. Sadly, Harry died in 2018 but his legacy is continued by his widow Pat and the sustainable community led scheme is now a joy to behold.

What bulbs have been planted? (*25 points*)

Daffodils & Narcissi have been planted since the outset and topped up each year. Crocuses have also been planted over a number of years and are similarly topped up. Plus snowdrops, native bluebells, winter aconites and spring and autumn Cyclamen.

How many bulbs approx. have been put in? (*25 points*)

8,000 daffodils and narcissi and 6,000 + crocuses, planted over a number of years. 2,000 snowdrops, 2,000 winter aconites, 2,000 native bluebells & 1,000 cyclamen

Is there a theme behind the planting? (*25 points*)

The main theme is for the plants to be seen in their natural habitats, amongst grasses, wildflowers and trees. Planting has taken place alongside the Woodbrook and flower lined walks have been created using woodchip. There is also a fairy trail to encourage young children and to attract them to the value of protecting the environment.

Who was involved with the planting? (*25 points*)

The main group of 20 volunteers is the Forest Road Green Belt Gardeners, however around 15 to 20 local scouts are regularly involved in planting days, as are smaller groups of youngsters from Hardwick House, Autistic Spectrum School and Glebe Houser work skills group, (maybe 25 in all). Finally the Beacon Rotary Club have recently planted 1,500 more crocuses for world polio day.

Any other relevant information

Although the Green Belt is owned by Charnwood BC, it carries out only basic maintenance at the site, via its Green Spaces contractors idverde. The green Belt gardeners have a formal agreement to work on the site and all additional planting and care is undertaken by the various volunteers from across the local community resulting in 5 years of community Green flag awards.

Judges' comments

Large number of bulbs planted over the years forming an imposing impact on the Greenway. Good use of spring flowers. Good community involvement

Points 95/100	Award: Gold
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DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

HORTICULTURE EXCELLENCE WITHIN PARKS SPONSORED BY GE VIEWS WINNER WELLAND PARK MARKET HARBOROUGH



This park is an excellent example of the Community, Contractors and Council working together in partnership to the benefit of residents. It is presented to a very high standards, free from litter, with a superb Rose Garden with herb border, It has an even balance of new perennial plantings whilst keeping some bedding. A new Arboretum, Wild Flowers, focus for events, Playground and Tea rooms. Arisings Recycled and seats maintained, insect friendly plants. (The Bloom raises funding for the park replacing roses mulching, feeding (Eco Friendly), Dead Heading. Planted new trees signage. A Bloom HQ in park for growing plants and opportunities for children and adults.)

EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM AWARD FOR LEAST LITTERED WINNER LOUGHBOROUGH



Loughborough's varied route was impressively clean throughout, from the Outwoods SSSI site to the Forest Road Green Belt, Queen's Park, the University and the spotless town centre. Judges were told about an end-of-term clear-out initiative for students, with Charnwood Borough Council and the University partnering with the Air Ambulance and the British Heart Foundation to deliver charity bags to every student property, and contractor Serco helping free of charge. No graffiti or dog fouling was seen en route. The policy is to remove offensive graffiti within two hours, anything else within 24 hours.

BEST NEW PERMANENT LANDSCAPE SUPPORTED BY THE ART DEPART (TAD) NOTTINGHAM PRESENTED BY TAYLORS BULBS



WINNER EDINBURGH PARK CHESTERFIELD

Edinburgh Road's pocket park has been transformed from a tired run-down area with an ugly 'Berlin Wall' into a stunning site alive with plants and colour. The work is led by The Healthy Friends of Edinburgh Road Park who were involved in community consultation and in helping to secure funding of almost £20,000. The first phase of improvements, including raised beds and paving, was completed during the first lockdown in spring 2020, followed by a socially distanced bulb planting later that year. In autumn 2021 the group along with local schoolchildren planted 30 trees and ten fruit trees on the park. There's also a wildflower patch planted with community help. The focal point of the park is a series of magnificent, raised beds, now in their second season and looking glorious, with well-established Lavender, Hemerocallis, Hardy Geraniums, Kniphofia, Spiraea and waving stems of Verbena bonariensis complementing the many grasses. The stunning mural of plants, birds and animals by local urban artist Peter Barber is the perfect backdrop and really makes the site unique. Seating within the bays of the beds ensures a wonderful place to sit and chat, or just to soak up the atmosphere of this great little site.

EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM BEST WILDFLOWER/CONSERVATION AREA WINNER JUBILEE WILDFLOWER MEADOW SCUNTHORPE



Scunthorpe's impressive range of wildflower areas included Mortal Ash road – 4km of meadow planting along the road to Grimsby – as well as a large Jubilee wildflower meadow, all sown with the assistance of volunteers. The £18,000-worth of seed was funded as a Capital Project by North Lincolnshire Council. The scheme is 20,000 square metres in total, and 9kg of perennial seed will be added in September 2022 once the hay has been cut and cleared. The meadow areas play a part in the B-line planting promoted by Bug Life – encouraging planting dedicated to 'saving the small things that run the planet' – and which is now established from Scotland to the South Coast. Members of the public made countless calls to the council to praise the wildflower planting and to ask for details of the seed mix for their own gardens.

EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM COMMITTEE AWARD



WINNERS JAN JACKSON LITTLEOVER

Since Littleover first entered the "Bloom" campaign in 2009, Jan has worked tirelessly to improve her area, drumming up volunteer support from various groups throughout the community and local businesses. The improvement Littleover in Bloom has made to this urban community has been impressive and continues to this day due to her enthusiasm and determination.

BERYL HARPER ST CRISPINS VILLAGE

Over the last 16 years Beryl Harper has created the most beautiful gardens at St Crispin Retirement Village Northampton.

Beryl was one of the first residents and her imaginative planting schemes using mostly perennials are not only well designed but also low maintenance making it ideal for the older gardener. Each of the 16 members of the gardening club have responsibility for an individual patch of the grounds. Beryl is the driving force behind the gardeners. Whilst a recent fall and covid has reduced her mobility (she is 90+) she inspires and leads her team. Her high standards of horticulture including an immaculate propagation area and library and her continuing thirst for knowledge is invigorating and uplifting for all those around her.

EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM BEST VILLAGE/TOWN ENTRANCE



WINNER QUARNDON

It has a lovely entrance and lots of floral displays in the village too, it's very well kept with some lovely cottage gardens sharing their views with the street, we will make sure this is posted out to them with a covering letter of congratulations.

DOUG STACEY YOUNG PERSON AWARD

WINNER KIAN GRANT MELTON MOWBRAY Head gardener Kian Grant contact address via Principal Long Field Spencer Academy. Approval has been obtained by Melton in Bloom from School Principal to nominate Kian as he requires teaching assistant support. Kian is clearly very committed to growing plants at school and also looking after the nature reserve, school greenhouse. He grows many veg and plants from seed. Surplus plants are sold to raise funds for school garden projects. Kian also potted up some plants to adorn classrooms. He has dedicated curriculum time to work in the garden and it is clearly his forte. As a keen gardener he also wrote to nearby residents offering to help them with their gardens and is currently helping a number of them. In the nature reserve he has been clearing the stream of metal objects (magnet fishing), scrub clearing, path making and pond monitoring. He observed many wild creatures and recorded them on his camera. He has spent many hours between studies litter picking and ensuring the school remained tidy and presentable. He is respected by other students and takes great pride in showing others what he has grown and achieved.