

Congratulations on having entered the 2009 East Midlands in Bloom Competition!

East Midlands in Bloom is the regional competition of 'Britain in Bloom' and has been running for over 30 years. The campaign focuses on three core pillars of horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation. It has a dedicated team of experienced committee members and judges most of whom are horticulturally qualified and members of the RHS. They give their time voluntarily to give advice to entrants and are available for the judging period during the first half of July.

East Midlands in Bloom will have a New Entrants Workshop in February 2010 to which everyone is welcome to attend. It will be held in Rosliston, Derbyshire. More details will be available later in the year. Please also visit our website: www.eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk
The Committee and Judges thank you for making superb efforts to the 'Bloom' Campaign this year and wish you all the best in 2010.

CRITERIA

SECTION A Horticultural Achievement 50% of total marks

SECTION B Environmental Responsibility 25% of total marks

SECTION C Community Participation 25% of total marks

CATEGORY AWARDS

There are five grades of award:-

1. Gold – marks 85% & above (170- 200 points) Outstanding

This is awarded to exceptional achievers who have demonstrated a consistently high standard in all areas of the judging criteria and objectives of Britain in Bloom

2. Silver Gilt - 75-84% (150-169 points) Very Good

This is awarded to an entrant who has met the judging criteria and objectives with a very high standard throughout, and has in one or more areas been exceptionally thorough. This award has the potential to achieve a Gold Award in the future.

3. Silver – 60-74% (120-149 points) Good

This award is for an above average entry, and has met most of the judging criteria and objectives for Britain in Bloom and has displayed the potential to progress to Silver Gilt Award

4. Bronze – 50-59% (100 – 119 points) Average

This is a commendable entry meeting the sustainable standards required, and has the potential to progress to Silver Award.

5. Certificate of Achievement – 0-49% (0-99 points) Fair

This is a fair entry aiming to meet the sustainable standards required, and has the potential to progress to Bronze Award.

SMALL TOWN

General Comments

These 11 entries were judged by Chris Beal and Ian Cooke. Community participation and voluntary efforts were the strengths of the category, with so much of what was seen done through local efforts on the ground. The involvement of children and of allotment holders was particularly noted.

Judges – Chris Beal and Ian Cooke

LONG SUTTON (1st): Gold Award - 172 points

Judged on 16th July

*** Judges Award: For the creation and maintenance of the Community Garden at Annie's Patch**

The tour began at the Butterfly with a press photograph in the wildlife garden. Throughout the tour we met many enthusiastic volunteers along the way. The full colour portfolio for this entrant had been copied and distributed to 2500 households locally to advertise the bloom campaign, a remarkable achievement. We visited numerous community plantings throughout the town, showing the work and dedication of this “blooming” community.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The re-development of a derelict corner of land to create and maintain a community garden at Annie's Patch
- The gardens at Cowpers Gate, maintained by the Local residents Association
- The quality, quantity and colour balance of the floral displays throughout the town

SECTION B

- The re-use of materials, plants etc in the communities schemes rather than buying new.
- The solar panel at the school to heat the glasshouse
- The new Eco-dwellings site and the enthusiasm of the residents in having the allotment crops ready to eat before they move into the dwellings
- The various composting initiatives throughout the town.
- The works to disguise the derelict building in the town with the murals on the boarding up and the flower containers

SECTION C

- The size and participation of the bloom group is to be commended
- The varied successful funding initiatives run by the group
- The successful links with the press in publicising campaign initiatives
- The Bloom Group display in the shop window showing their efforts and advertising events etc
- The advertising of the campaign by delivering the portfolio to every household in the town
- The beautifully hand painted signs advertising the bloom on displays
- The Bloom tabards & ‘high vis’ vests worn by the volunteers whilst undertaking their tasks

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Permanent planting the Garnsgate Road Triangle would be more likely to be successful & visually effective in this location.

SECTION B

- Provide interpretation at the wildlife areas.
- Improve the pathway at Common Pitt pond
- Liaise with the Town / district / county councils over cleansing and repainting street furniture particularly seats
- Put more emphasis on the heritage of the area in the campaign

SECTION C

- Research a contingency plan for the poly-tunnel so that the initiative can successfully continue if the current land becomes unavailable.

- Look at developing further links with the school to use them in initiatives outside of the school grounds
- Consider reducing the number of people on the whole tour but meet them in strategic locations

A=88 B=39 C=45 TOTAL 172

UPPINGHAM (2nd): Silver Gilt Award - 152 points

Judged on 8th July

*** Judges Award: For the work and enthusiasm of the youngsters of Leighfield Primary School**

The visit was conducted mainly on foot and some beautiful sites were seen around the town. In particular, the enthusiasm and knowledge of the children at Leighfield Primary School was one of the highlights of this village. Also the arboretum and wonderfully maintained grounds of the Uppingham School with public access are a credit to the town.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The colour mix and quality of the floral displays throughout the town.
- The interpretation and range of species in the arboretum
- The achievements of the Leighfield Primary School in such a short space of time.

SECTION B

- Use of locally produced material for mulching
- The bird boxes in the wildlife garden
- The general cleanliness of the town
- The superb grounds of Uppingham School

SECTION C

- Excellent involvement of a wide range of the community
- Excellent fund raising work
- Good evidence of year round activities

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Look at additional tree and shrub planting at Tods Piece Recreation ground

SECTION B

- More emphasis on local heritage required particularly in the Portfolio and information leaflets
- More specific recycling information required

SECTION C

- Consider further links with all schools particularly in respect to using them in activities outside the school grounds.

A=82 B=32 C=38 TOTAL 152

BAKEWELL (3rd): Silver Award - 146 points

Judged on 13th July

*** Judges Award: – For the excellent allotments in the town particularly the work in such a short time on the new site**

The tour started in glorious sunshine in the agricultural centre; it was very pleasing to see that this centre continues to thrive for the town. Our itinerary took in many wonderful areas starting with the well maintained allotments and Meaden Bridge wildlife area. An unplanned detour to avoid the tourist and market traffic showed us some wonderful residential front gardens. The new allotment site by the local housing association was a little delight; the work carried out by the residents in just 1 month was remarkable. A walk along the river through Wynne Meadow and Scotts Garden led us back into town for a final visit to the wonderful Bath Gardens with its bowling green, high standards of horticulture and commendable traditional carpet bedding.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Bath Gardens, an oasis of colour within the town centre exhibiting some good examples of horticulture including a bed of carpet bedding
- The new allotment site as a partnership between the Town Council and the housing association, particularly the progress achieved on site in only 1 month
- The hanging baskets around the town, the colour coordination and the strategic placing of them, remarkable with a 40% increase in numbers over 2 years

SECTION B

- The number and quality of the wildlife areas within the town
- The work by the Bakewell Methodist Junior school on the wildlife areas within the school grounds
- The cleanliness of the town throughout, particularly remarkable as the judging day was Market Day

SECTION C

- The work put in to encourage more people onto the Bloom steering group

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Refurbishment of the sensory garden in the Riverside Gardens, the sensory aspect is fast diminishing and some planting is inappropriate.
- New planting sites throughout the town need identifying and actioning
- Continue with working with the owner of the old British Legion garden within Bath Gardens to secure greater control over maintenance.
- Put more emphasis on the "Rec" into the campaign either a visit or within the portfolio.

SECTION B

- More interpretation needed on the wildlife areas
- Open up walkways through the Meaden Bridge Wildlife Project

SECTION C

- More year round bloom initiative projects required, look into tree and bulb planting, formal litter picks etc
- Seek sponsorship to make the initiative sustainable
- Show more evidence of press coverage of bloom initiatives

A=71 B=38 C=27 TOTAL 136

GROBY: Silver Award - 145 points

Judged on 16th July

*** Judges Award: For the work in encouraging youngsters in gardening at the Mes Enfants day nursery**

This visit saw the start of this year's judging of this category, and what a delight it was, the enthusiasm of everyone we met must be recorded particularly the youngsters at the school and on the allotments who were so keen to tell us all about their projects. Community flower beds are located along roads throughout the town brightening up street corners and bus stop sites.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The themed baskets at the Mes Enfants day nursery and the work the nursery are doing in teaching about plants and food etc.
- The mixed border at Pymm Ley, maintained by the community.
- The maintenance of the highway verges throughout the town
- The good attempt at colour themes throughout the town
- The utilisation of the tree warden scheme to acquire more trees for planting

SECTION B

- The water recycling on the allotments utilising water from the adjacent church roof

- Good recycling initiatives throughout the campaign
- The wildlife and natural areas of the hay meadow, wildlife corridor and Groby Pool all with public access.
- Using street furniture manufactured from recycled plastic
- A nice clean litter free town

SECTION C

- The involvement of the day nursery in the campaign and the work they are doing in promoting growing with the youngsters.
- The children assisting on the allotments and using the allotments as an outdoor classroom.
- The guides planting at the church
- The maintenance of beds throughout the town by local residents all "in kind"
- The Groby in Bloom noticeboards to advertise bloom initiatives

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- The themed baskets at the Mes Enfants day nursery and the work the nursery are doing in teaching about plants and food etc.
- The mixed border at Pymm Ley, maintained by the community.
- The maintenance of the highway verges throughout the town
- The good attempt at colour themes throughout the town
- The utilisation of the tree warden scheme to acquire more trees for planting

SECTION B

- Publicise the local heritage more through leaflets walks etc
- Signage and interpretation could be improved, most prominent signs were those telling you what not to do
- Put interpretation panels at the wildlife areas to inform visitors about the site.

SECTION C

- More pro-active use should be made of the press
- Encourage younger people to get involved on the Committee
- Provide more evidence of winter activities within the submission such as bulb planting, tree planting etc.

A=75 B=35 C=35 TOTAL 145

CRESWELL: Silver Medal Award – 141 points

Judged on 10th July

👑 East Midlands in Bloom Award for the Most Improved Entrant

★ Judges Award: For the excellent Welbeck Estates Allotments particularly the plots of Jimmy Lack & Pete Dodds

The visit started with a trip to the junior school to see the gardening clubs achievements within a 4 month time span. The enthusiasm of these children needs congratulating. We moved on to Landmarks, a centre for people with learning difficulties where it was a joy to see the construction of garden furniture, plant production & other crafts. The refurbishment of the Model Village, the traditional shops decorated and the old school showed the commendable work of the Townscape Initiative. A visit to the Welbeck Estates allotments saw some excellent crops being grown and the afternoon was rounded off with a visit to Creswell Crag, the new visitor centre has been tastefully designed and landscaped to fit into the environment.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The new car park and visitor centre at the Crag for both hard and soft landscaping appropriate to its surroundings
- The well maintained residential gardens throughout the town
- The work achieved by the Creswell Junior School in such a short space of time
- The excellent allotment plots and the number of sites within the Town

SECTION B

- The plans for the new project at Markland & Hollin Hill Grip
- The varied wildlife sites throughout the town, the Craggs, the Grip, Wollen Meadow
- The local heritage and recycling are well emphasised throughout the visit and supporting evidence
- The work at Creswell Craggs in promoting the heritage of the area and its educational work is commendable.

SECTION C

- The plans for future projects within the town
- The involvement with the local schools in bloom initiatives

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- The maintenance of new plantings need to be monitored
- The planting at the war memorial gardens are beginning to look tired consider a phased replacement programme
- Liaise closer with the District Council over verge maintenance

SECTION B

- More attention required to vacant premises
- Disappointing to see heavily littered areas adjacent to the car park upon arrival

SECTION C

- Encourage a wider range of participants into the initiatives and ultimately the Bloom steering group.

A=71 B=36 C=34 TOTAL 141

IBSTOCK: Silver Medal Award – 130 points

Judged on 17th July

*** Judges Award: For Ivor Gemson for 63 years work on the allotments and his gardening work for the community**

Ibstock was the only new entrant in the small towns category this year and what a delight it was, particularly seeing the town from an open topped bus. Luckily the weather was fine! The entry had been put together in a few months building upon the existing initiatives the Parish Council was already providing. A taste of what was to come was provided at the start with a Powerpoint presentation from the Community College in held in the old cinema. This group had many excellent ideas and we feel this entrant has a very promising future in 'Bloom'.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The quantity of colour throughout the town
- The areas of sustainable planting replacing annual bedding such as the herbaceous border by the side of the church and the box / lavender bed within the cemetery.
- The quantity and maintenance of the allotment plots
- The new planting at the new David Wilson Homes development and the Wilson House Industrial Park

SECTION B

- The quantity of publically accessible woodland around the town.
- The initiative to create a new wildflower meadow on an untidy vacant plot
- The heritage display within The Palace by the history group

SECTION C

- The achievement of putting together a successful bloom entry in such a short space of time
- The Community competitions, the front garden, hanging basket and allotment competitions
- The community use of the buildings ensures they remain a viable and sustainable resource along with the free usage of the football grounds pavilion by some groups.
- The involvement of the Community College in researching the area and putting together the presentation for the judging.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- The design of some of the highway flower beds needs revisiting, some needs to be less formal for their location, use larger areas of bold planting to give impact. Incorporate permanent planting within the beds for sustainability.
- Involve the schools within the bloom campaign, show evidence of their projects either by visit or portfolio.
- Consider relocating some of the hanging baskets for greater impact, ie the one in the cemetery alpine garden could be put to greater use within the town.
- The annual beds in the old garden of remembrance, would be more suited to sustainable planting

SECTION B

- More evidence required on recycling within the town.
- Bird boxes etc at the Nature Walk would encourage more wildlife into the area.
- Clear lower branches from trees in the nature walk to allow light onto the floor to encourage the under-storey

SECTION C

- Increase and show more evidence of press involvement in the bloom initiative
- Seek further funding to increase initiatives, ie sponsorship of baskets and beds
- Enlist involvement and support from a wider range of the Community
- A portfolio is required to show greater evidence of year round projects and areas that cannot be visited in the judging, showing the portfolio as a presentation at the beginning is a good idea

A=67 B=35 C=28

TOTAL 130

MARKET DEEPING: Silver Medal Award - 130 points

Judged on 9th July

*** Judges Award: For the innovative use of a paved front garden at 26 Glebe Fields**

The tour around the town started from the town hall on foot, the giant Wellingtonia in the churchyard deserves mention in this entrant. The visit to the playing fields showed new initiatives in the refurbished play ground and the construction of the new competition standard BMX track. A trip around the town in the car showed many beautiful highlights culminating in a visit to the community centre to see the work the volunteers carry out.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The standard of the hanging baskets provided by the town council in the town centre and also those provided by the many retail premises. The new planting at the rear of the police station, although simplistic it brightens up that corner.
- The front garden of No 9 Glebe View, a colourful oasis on a paved area.
- The high standard of maintenance on the industrial premises. The diverse range of plants in the garden of the Swines Meadow Garden Centre, although only visible to garden centre customers it deserves a mention.

SECTION B

- The wildlife garden at William Hildyard Primary School, particularly the recycling of water from the roof and the outdoor classroom stage.
- Excellent interpretation of local heritage throughout the visit.

SECTION C

- The amount of work achieved by such a small campaign organising group. The maintenance of the Community by the various volunteer groups.
- The provision of the floral displays by the various retail premises.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Look at utilising the recreational areas more, differential mowing to provide wildflower areas etc. Be more pro-active on tree planting and improve on early years maintenance. Closer cooperation with the District and County Council will give improved verge maintenance.

SECTION B

- Liaise closer with other agencies on cleanliness, litter etc.
- Emphasise the existing recycling regimes more.
- Look at improved recycling in the cemetery.

SECTION C

- Seek out wider community involvement at all levels; try to get more involved at a higher level.
- Increase press coverage, if the press don't follow up press releases then use the press releases in the portfolio and other publicity material.
- Consider ways of extending fund raising activities throughout the year.
- Look at expanding initiatives throughout the year

A=68 B=32 C=30 TOTAL 130

SWANWICK: Silver Medal Award – 124 points

Judged on 10th July 2009

*** Judges Award:** For the excellent standard of grounds maintenance at the Hayes Conference Centre

The tour started with a visit to the Memorial Gardens where the local primary school were busy planting out the new retaining wall. This tranquil site offers space for local residents to remember their loved ones. The trip around the town saw many well maintained front gardens and the visit to the Hayes Conference Centre was the highlight of this visit, the spectacular trees and the lakes are a joy to see. Many different wildlife areas were seen on this visit which terminated in a visit to the newly opened play area.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The amount of colour displayed throughout the town
- The number of planters and baskets throughout the town
- The well maintained residential gardens, the best kept garden competition and the open gardens scheme
- The planters made by and filled by the Delves school
- The quality of the Grounds at Hayes Conference Centre

SECTION B

- The many and varied wildlife areas within the town
- The good use of the pit tubs as planters, recycles old objects and symbolises the heritage
- The varied recycling initiatives on the allotments

SECTION C

- The amount of sponsorship for a small town
- The vast cross sector of the Community involved with initiatives

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Look at the siting of and size of some of the planters, some in remote locations are lost.
- Look into more shrub planting at the Memorial Garden in place of trees
- Liaise closer with the District and County Council over highway weed spraying
- Get the schools involved in their own grounds as well as the Memorial Gardens
- Avoid areas on the tour that exhibit signs of enviro-crime

SECTION B

- Use interpretation boards on the wildlife areas
- Put more emphasis onto the recycling initiatives throughout the town, bring sites, kerb-side, composting on allotments, Memorial Garden etc

SECTION C

- The portfolio needs to concentrate more on Bloom initiatives, also be aware of the advised size
- Link community activities to the bloom, particularly fund raising

A=64 B=30 C=30 TOTAL 124

CROWLAND: Bronze Medal Award - 112 points

Judged on 9th July 2009

*** Judges Award:** For the colour and impact of the front garden of 26 Postland Road

The first call of the judging was to the school where representatives of the gardening club gave an informative guided tour of the gardens. This was followed by a visit to the Millennium Garden and the Abbey. A walk around the impressive allotments was curtailed by an extremely heavy rain shower! The afternoon was rounded off by a visit to the new nature area on the site of the old swimming pool.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The new garden at the Abbey Playgroup with its sensory planting and wildlife pond.
- The enthusiasm and achievements of the gardening club at South View Primary School
- The quality of the hanging baskets throughout the town.
- The colourful display at the front garden of No 26 Postland Road.

SECTION B

- Wildlife gardens throughout the town are well looked maintained.
- The monthly greenwaste collection by the district council is a good alternative to a kerbside service
- The baskets and planters are all grown in peat free compost.

SECTION C

- The involvement of the schools in bloom type initiatives.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Explore opportunities for planting developments on the playing fields.

- Show a more diverse range of commercial premises in the campaign

SECTION B

- Increase the local heritage content of the campaign.
- Explore the recycling of flowers again at the cemetery.
- The management of the street furniture needs to be looked at.

SECTION C

- Press coverage, both on the day and during the campaign in general needs to be increased. Press cuttings should be of recent events ie since the last judging.
- Look for further initiatives to secure additional funding.
- Look into events throughout the year to encourage participation by a wider audience of the community, encourage some of these to come on board to the organising group.

A=54 B=35 C=23 TOTAL 112

HOLBEACH: Bronze Medal Award- 112 points

Judged on 16th July 2009

*** Judges Award:** For the floral displays at the Chequers Hotel

The tour started with a photo shoot set within the floral displays of the Town Council Offices. A visit to the school saw the developing gardens and then a tour of the town took in all the sights that the bloom initiative is all about. At the end of the tour the judges were asked to present the winning pub in the Town Council's competition with their award. A most enjoyable afternoon.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The quantity of baskets and flower tubs within the town
- The well maintained trees within the public areas in the town. The new tree planting taking place within the new cemetery

SECTION B

- Recycling in general in the town needs commending. The recycling of all the old bedding plants and hanging baskets etc on a vacant allotment plot is an excellent idea. The recycled plastic seats at the George Farmer Technology College are excellent, recycling of old materials and so easy to maintain
- The use of the old funeral bier as a planter in the cemetery is a quirky way of linking recycling and heritage in an appropriate setting

SECTION C

- A well balanced and sizeable bloom group. The group have some good plans for future initiatives. The group have some good links with the local schools
- The clean up / litter picks 2 occasions per year using the group and other volunteer groups
- The best kept pub competition and linking this to the bloom with the presentation by the bloom judges

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Consider colour theming the baskets throughout the town
- The involvement of the George Farmer College of Technology in planting the bed in the park is to be commended but the design needs direction in terms of suitability and choice of plants

- The area of Japanese knotweed in the park and encroaching into the school grounds requires urgent attention
- More areas of sustainable planting required throughout the town

SECTION B

- More emphasis required on the wildlife areas. More emphasis on recycling initiatives within the portfolio required. Look at management of graffiti and unkempt areas
- The highly poisonous Oleander should be removed from the herb garden at the school

SECTION C

- More evidence of press / publicity of bloom activities. Look into further fundraising activities as a way of increasing available funds
- Investigate using the bloom group's horticulturalists in giving guidance to the schools gardening clubs to supplement the time available by the teaching staff.

A=54 B=28 C=30 TOTAL 112

BLIDWORTH: Certificate of Achievement – 81 points

Judged on 15th July 2009

*** Judges Award:** For the colourful display at the Fox and Hounds Public House

The visit to this ex-mining community started with a visit to the local fire station to see the simple but effective displays maintained by the firefighters themselves. A walk down the main street saw the work carried out on environmental improvements over recent years showing this as a community that is working hard to revitalise the town. The new housing development next door has some excellent new landscaping. The highlight of the tour was the war memorial landscaping and gardens maintained by one volunteer.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Spectacular display at the war memorial achieved by one volunteer member of the community
- The new landscaping both hard and soft at Rockings View housing association development. The floral display at the Fox & Hounds public house. The display of colour at Marklew Close housing association complex

SECTION B

- The innovative use of recycled gas cylinders for litter bins
- The quality of the hard landscaping at the war memorial / well site

SECTION C

- The bloom steering committee consisting of 6 active members
- The fire station grounds maintained by the retained fire-fighters
- The war memorial maintained by one member of the community

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Look at relocating some hanging baskets into more appropriate locations
- Liaise with the District Council regarding correct pruning techniques on the highway shrub beds rather than hedgetrimmer pruning. More evidence required of new tree and shrub planting schemes

SECTION B

- More emphasis required on wildlife initiatives, consider using Tippings Wood as part of the judging route
- Greater emphasis required within the portfolio on recycling initiatives within the town. More interpretation required both on site and in the portfolio of local heritage etc
- Pay attention to litter in the outlying areas such as the footpath leading to Bulls Piece

SECTION C

- Get greater involvement with local schools both within their grounds and out in the community. More press and publicity evidence required within the portfolio. More evidence of year round activities required
- Investigate sponsorship of hanging baskets etc to increase funding to help with improving initiatives
- Be aware of the recommended length of the portfolio

A=51 B=15 C=15 TOTAL 81

TOWN

General Comments

The East Midlands Region is blessed with many delightful towns and the Judge this year was treated to a tour illustrating many of the best elements of them. It was fantastic to see how communities are making a real difference in a sustainable way. The involvement of children as our future generation of "Bloomers" was particularly satisfying and was demonstrated very well in this category. The success of the towns this year was highlighted by the number of Judges and Special Awards gained within this category demonstrating a very high level of achievement.

Judge – Mel Henley

OAKHAM: (1st) Gold Award – 176 points

Judged on 16th July 2009

***Judges Award:** Mill Street, shops and restaurants for the high impact and quality floral displays

The dedicated and enthusiastic Team demonstrate what is required by this "Top Flight" entry. Returning to the town after a few years it was obvious to the Judge how much progress is being made and what a difference the "Bloom" campaign is making to the high quality environment of this beautiful, historic town. From stunning high impact floral displays to environmental planting and screening the route was flooded with examples of community involvement in all areas. Fantastic Oakham!

Judge: Mel Henley

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Excellent quality, high impact floral displays throughout the route
- Top class standards of horticultural husbandry from volunteers and professionals alike
- The higher standards of maintenance in the park was particularly apparent
- The fantastic commitment from the businesses along Mill Street

SECTION B

- Visionary planting and screening of the periphery of the town
- An excellent quality street scene complimented by well chosen and maintained furniture
- The interpretation of the towns heritage through the landscape and street environment

SECTION C

- This entrant scored a perfect 10 in the way it plans to sustain and develop the "Bloom" campaign
- Who is not involved? This was the impression left to the Judge. Enthusiastic, organised, highly skilled volunteers everywhere! And all the year round!
- The sustainable high level of funding and support is exemplary, from volunteer support through to local businesses and the

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Consider showing more of the park on the tour, particularly now that standards have significantly improved and the bandstand is set for refurbishment
- Seek to encourage specific areas such as the Rutland Care Village to enter the Neighbourhood category of EMIB

SECTION B

- Ensure that the issue of dog fouling along the path to Gorse Field Wood is appropriately resolved, perhaps the installation of a bin would assist.
- Consider providing Judges with information about the successes of habitat creation particularly at Gorse Field Wood. For example, what flora and fauna has been encouraged and what had previously existed.

SECTION C

- As previously mentioned encourage individual communities to enter into the regional Neighbourhoods category, to gain recognition of their efforts and demonstrate how wide the Oakham in Bloom Campaign is.

A=89 B=42 C=45 TOTAL 176

MATLOCK: (2nd): Silver Gilt Medal Award - 156 points

Judged on 14th July 2009

***Judges Award:** The creation of several floral seated areas around the town

Matlock, a town of stunning views has made significant strides in the development and improvement of its "Bloom" campaigns. Increases in the community involvement together with demonstrating horticultural excellence particularly at Hall Leys Park illustrate that this entrant has the potential to reach the gold medal standard as it continues to improve. New enthusiastic participants have swelled seasoned campaigners ranks and the route demonstrates an improved balance in meeting the criteria.

Judge: Mel Henley

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The horticultural excellence demonstrated at Hall Leys Park particularly impressed the Judge, including the re-introduction of high quality carpet bedding.
- The extension of florally enhanced seating areas around the town has improved the environment for both residents and visitors and demonstrates the extent to where the "Bloom" campaign extends to in the town.
- Wow.... Don't you have some wonderful residential gardens!

SECTION B

- The town was delightfully clean with a total absence of dog fouling and minimal litter and graffiti
- High quality street furniture added to the pride of place demonstrated by the cleanliness standards
- Denefields continues to demonstrate good conservation efforts, enhanced by improved access

SECTION C

- Clearly there has been significant improvement in this area. The provision of statistics relating to volunteer hours (when requested) demonstrated this.
- The Town's efforts are well supported by the local press with good coverage across the year that informs and educates residents about the "Bloom" campaign and demonstrates the number and range of community projects.
- The involvement and support of Transition Matlock has had an influential and positive impact on bringing the community together, organising and promoting environmental projects.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Show the Judges more of Hall Leys Park to demonstrate more of the “Bloom” criteria in your Green Flag accredited park, also consider the Green Heritage Award
- Seek out, encourage and develop more commercial premises to demonstrate this part of the criteria. Notwithstanding restaurants and pubs, more substantial commercial premises need to be illustrated to improve the marks in this area
- Try to encourage high standards of maintenance at all public buildings on the route

SECTION B

- Provide more information regarding the results of habitat creation and protection, i.e. numbers of species and trends, this could be done at Bailey’s Tump for example even if there is not time to go on to the site
- Realise your plans to provide better interpretation at Denefields that will inform and educate the public. Whilst the town was very clean in general, try to resolve the issues of graffiti at some sites or if not possible avoid taking Judges right past areas that do not demonstrate the overall standard

SECTION C

- Ensure that Judges are provided with vital statistics in terms of volunteer engagement, in terms of the range of projects, timing (all year round), and numbers and value. (You are doing more than what is initially apparent!)
- Try to ensure the Judges have more information about your future plans. Consider utilising the portfolio for everything that Judges will not see on the day. It does not actually need to include anything at all that Judges will see, so this is your opportunity to sell all the other things.
- Consider giving Judges a schedule of events that you organise or contribute to your campaign, both those occurring in the past 12 months and any planned. Again you are doing more than is at first obvious.

A=83 B=38 C=35 TOTAL 156

SYSTON: (3rd) Silver Gilt Award - 155 points

Judged on 15th July 2009

***Judges Award:** The pub garden and floral displays at The Queen Victoria

Syston is a community where pride of place and a care for the environment are clearly of paramount importance to the local community. The Judge was treated to a tour of the town and the nearby Watermead Park and was delighted to see the progress since his last visit. Community involvement and the conservation enhancements at Watermead were of particular note as was the cemetery. Clearly this entrant has significant potential from a high level of current achievement

Judge: Mel Henley

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The business areas and premises is a particular feature of the town with Pukka Pies leading the way. Good examples of residential gardens punctuated the route
- The town centre floral displays had a high impact to brighten the environment

SECTION B

- This town is clearly committed to recycling in a big sustainable way
- Watermead demonstrated excellent examples of conservation and the improvements to interpretation and viewing areas were welcomed

- This community clearly demonstrated a real pride of place as they cared for their environment and got involved in many ways

SECTION C

- The Judge was given significant evidence of community and commercial involvement with the provision of statistics being very useful in demonstrating the value of this to your campaign
- The level of funding for the campaign left the Judge with no doubt that it is sustainable with a bright future ahead. There was plenty of evidence particularly from the press releases that this campaign goes all the year round

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Try to ensure a consistent standard of plants and floral displays as some were more sparse and less developed
- Try to ensure that attention to detail is paid to horticultural features, particularly in the public areas in relation to edging, filling gaps and pruning. Also try to ensure consistent standards of grass cutting throughout the route

SECTION B

- Some parts of the route were unfortunately marred with litter and graffiti, try to ensure that more attention to detail is demonstrated in this area
- Continue with the plans to further develop and improve Watermead as explained to the Judge, this was seen as a positive in terms of sustaining the future "Bloom" campaign.

SECTION C

- Consider the use of the portfolio to demonstrate anything you can that the Judges will not actually see on the route
- Whilst it is understood that schools are judged separately, consider providing more evidence of schools involvement on the main route to ensure that the criteria in this area is fully demonstrated
- Try to ensure that the route fully demonstrates the demands from the subtle changes to the marking

A=79 B=37 C=39 TOTAL 155

BOURNE Silver Gilt Award - 154 points

Judged on 15th July 2009

***Judges Award:** The sensitive environmental management of Bourne Woods

The bustling market town of Bourne is blessed with its location on the edge of rolling hills and woodland. You are continuing to make strides to improve the "Bloom" campaign. The Judge returning after a few years particularly welcomed the inclusion of the very well managed Bourne Woods. Our guides demonstrated great enthusiasm and knowledge of their town demonstrating its highlights skilfully. There is confidence that the "Bloom" will continue grow. Certainly the population was actively growing with teachers not able to meet Judges due to babies arriving. (What will they do to avoid us!)? Congratulations to both!

Judge: Mel Henley

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Increased floral displays that are located to achieve maximum impact
- A good range and quality of residential gardens, successfully woven into the route

- The very high quality of Bourne Cemetery with year round displays and exceptional maintenance standards

SECTION B

- Bourne Woods is an exemplar of where the needs of public access are sensitively managed to protect the natural habitats
- Bourne was exceptionally clean with no visible litter, graffiti, or dog fouling, demonstrating a clear gold medal standard in this area and contributing to the sense of pride the local community have
- The recycling rates achieved and many examples of how you are continually striving to improve this area greatly impressed the Judge, and a clear gold medal standard was gained in this criteria

SECTION C

- It was obvious that your "Bloom" Campaign extends throughout the year not just with planning but with activities to retain the momentum that the campaign requires
- The efforts of the schools in Bourne are commended, particular those at the Abbey and Willoughby School, the latter which caters for children and youths with special needs and involves them in creating a high quality natural environment
- The involvement of children, youths and those less able or vulnerable is a particular feature of your campaign that really makes a difference to the lives of those involved

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Try to establish the floral displays earlier by the use of larger plants and by regular feeding that will ensure they cascade more fully over the containers to improve the impact
- Consider the use of appropriately chosen herbaceous plants and shrubs mixed in with your floral displays to give both more impact and make displays more sustainable.
- The portfolio was of an excellent standard, however consider its use primarily to demonstrate your achievements that cannot be seen on the route itself, thus increasing the information that you give to Judges on how you meet the criteria even more

SECTION B

- Consider entering Bourne Woods for a Green Flag Award. Given that the criteria from this and the "Bloom" on several cases match this will help you to more fully demonstrate how you are achieving the "Bloom" criteria
- Continue the start that you have made to illustrate your wonderful local heritage in your floral displays and in other areas of your route. Perhaps a heritage trail could be made more obvious to Judges

SECTION C

- Try to obtain some statistics in terms of the number of volunteers hours and value of work that will ensure the full impact of the work you do is measured and improvements are clearer to demonstrate
- Consider the production of a leaflet that summarises the aims of your campaign and informs the public and organisations and businesses how they can become involved
- Continue to try to obtain increased sponsorship

A=77 B=41 C=36 TOTAL 154

KEYWORDH Silver Medal Award - 122 points

Judged on 15th July 2009

*** Judges Award:** The well designed and managed town cemetery

Set in the delightful Nottinghamshire Wolds it is fantastic to see this lovely town embracing the "Bloom" Campaign. The town has particular highlights in the impressively maintained bowling green, well-landscaped cemetery and a fantastic nature reserve with a very enthusiastic manager. The Judge was delighted to see both these highlights and how the "Bloom" Campaign is making a real difference to the whole community. There is confidence that this entrant will continue improving each year

Judge: Mel Henley

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- An impressive bowling green, maintained to a standard of excellence and framed by quality landscaping
- A well laid out and landscaped cemetery and lovely hair dresser's
- Tidy allotments demonstrating very good horticultural standards and a range of vegetable growing and recycling techniques

SECTION B

- A very well managed nature reserve presented by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide
- The efforts to recycle both demonstrated by the town as a whole and through local initiatives were commendable
- Most areas of the town were clean and tidy, which together with the community involvement demonstrated a pride of place

SECTION C

- The schools involvement was a great asset to your entry and demonstrated how you are beginning to involve the wider community
- You demonstrated how your campaign will continue to improve and make a difference to the environment and quality of life in the town, particularly through your community plan
- The highlights from the Keyworth Show were an excellent example of how you are involving the local community and promoting your campaign

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Try to obtain a higher quality of floral displays by using larger plants or starting the troughs and baskets earlier
- Pay attention to detail, particularly at your prime sites where Judges will walk, for example try to trim hedges prior to the tour
- Continue to encourage and increase the business involvement and pay particular attention to the quality of business premises you present to the Judges (excepting the hair dresser's that was excellent)
- Consider showing Judges inside the National Geological Survey Centre, where from your description several of the criteria may well be demonstrated

SECTION B

- Try to ensure that the high standards of cleanliness demonstrated on the majority of the route are maintained throughout, with particular attention to dog fouling

- Try to illustrate your local heritage through the design of floral features and continue with your plans to extend your excellent interpretation panels in the town centre
- Consider the nature reserve for the Green Flag awards, which given that several of the criteria matches East Midlands in Bloom will enhance your entry and further recognise the efforts to manage this site that is of great value to the town

SECTION C

- Use your portfolio to demonstrate what you are doing in parts of the town that Judges will not see on the day, and try to provide some vital statistics such as number and value of volunteer hours and number of press releases
- Consider having children meet Judges to talk about how they are involved and the difference it makes for them, this would be particularly effective at either the school or the skate park
- The fund raising from government funds and other wider sources is excellent, however continue your efforts to raise more funds locally, particularly from local business

A=58 B=36 C=28 TOTAL 122

LARGE TOWN

General Comments

This year there were eleven entries within the Large Towns category. Entries came from Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. This wasn't a year to appreciate an uninterrupted judging tour as on several occasions rain threatened to wash us away and judging had to be halted while the heavens opened. Unfortunately, due to the size of this category, illness and unforeseen circumstances, the judges had to reorganise themselves in order to cover the entries.

However, the judges were pleased with the progress made by participants who had clearly taken on board comments made in previous years.

Our welcome is extended to Gainsborough who entered the East Midlands In Bloom competition for the first time this year.

Judges – Tim Sharp, John Simpson, Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

BUXTON (1st) Gold Award - 175 points

Judged on 9th July 2009

*** Judges Award: Milnthorp Homes Project - To their volunteers for the standard of upkeep, permanent planting & wild flora area at the housing complex**

Jane McGrother met the judges in the Pavilion Gardens & we then proceeded to our meeting point at the Old Hall Hotel. Buxton was a blaze of colour and clearly demonstrated that much work had been done since the judge's visit last year. Wherever one looked, whether the Pavilion Gardens, our walk through the town or the residential gardens, the standard of presentation was exemplary.

Buxton has definitely responded to previous comments made by the judges.

Good luck with Entente Florale.

Judges: Tim Sharp & Doug Stacey

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The judges were most impressed with the standard of maintenance, floral work & permanent planting in the Pavilion Gardens.
- The hanging baskets & tiered planting outside the Opera House, Old Hall Hotel & along Spring Gardens was superb.
- Both judges were most impressed by the presentation of residential front gardens.

SECTION B

- We were very impressed with the overall management plan for Buxton. In particular the authority's attitude to sustainability, environmental considerations, tree conservation and the efforts to reduce the carbon footprint within the town are most commendable.
- The judge's noted the absence of litter, wild flora areas and the conservation area along the River Wye.
- The authorities recycling policy and educational programme is enlightening. Buxton now composts and recycles nearly 40% of its waste. We were also pleased to hear about the home composting initiative.

SECTION C

- The wild flora area, interpretation board, planting & maintenance at Milnthorp Homes is thanks to volunteers. This project is a clear example of what can be achieved by a community response.
- The ongoing work undertaken by the various partners of Buxton In Bloom have clearly demonstrated the virtues of community involvement.
- The judges would like to congratulate the town on the successful partnership at Pool's Cavern and Go Ape.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- The judges were pleased with the impact made by the hanging baskets & tiered planting along Spring Gardens. Continue with this initiative particularly the central area of this busy shopping area.
- The barrier troughs and seasonal bedding along Station Road significantly improves the overall appearance of this road. Additional bedding displays will only enhance this area further.
- The seasonal bedding displays in the Pavilion Gardens were good but do check that all displays are of this high standard.

SECTION B

- Try to encourage interpretation boards wherever possible as these are a valuable educational resource and give residents and visitors an insight into the work being undertaken on an environmental and historical front.
- Continue with your commendable environmental initiatives.
- Buxton's recycling and composting achievements are noteworthy. Keep up this good work.

SECTION C

- Continue to encourage the already impressive list of business sponsors in order to sustain and develop new projects.
- The Bloom Committee is obviously flourishing. However, try to get younger & disadvantaged members involved in order to fully represent the needs of the wider community.
- Demonstrating community participation is one of the overriding pillars of the Bloom initiative. Do try to manage these representations carefully.

A=88 B=43 C=44 TOTAL 175

MARKET HARBOROUGH (2nd): Gold Award - 170 points

Judged on 13th July 2009

*** Judges Award: The outstanding commitment of the volunteers of Harborough in Bloom - their time and effort is most evident throughout the town**

Judging commenced at the charming Three Swan's Hotel with a well structured introduction to our forthcoming tour. On route we were pleased to hear about the community & voluntary work that has added many hours of additional labour to Market Harborough's impressive floral displays & general presentation.

Our tour took in visits to the superb Welland Park, the Robert Smyth Arboretum, the Memorial Garden's, Scotland Road Allotments and the attractive floral displays in the town.

Judges: Tim Sharp & John Simpson

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The general presentation & horticultural excellence at Welland Park. Bedding displays were superb as was the new play area & natural habitat along the River Welland.
- The judges were impressed with the high standard of landscaping & maintenance along Arlington Way.
- The grounds of St. Nicholas Church were superb with sensitive use of herbaceous & perennials interspersed between the well tended lawns.

SECTION B

- You have introduced recycling points at many of the local parks and have demonstrated that the recycling of household waste is an important aspect of environmental quality.
- The streets and parks were litter free & we saw no signs of graffiti or vandalism; most impressive.

- The environmental benefits of the River Welland and the habitats it supports have been utilised well. The interpretation boards are a valuable teaching and educational resource.

SECTION C

- The work undertaken by the Harborough volunteers has most definitely made a big impression & their tireless efforts around the town are to be commended.
- The business community have been very supportive of Market Harborough's aspirations of excellence in the bloom initiative.
- The initial presentation & supporting portfolio demonstrates the commitment shown by the numerous organisations helping to make Harborough a cleaner, more pleasant place to live.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- We felt that the main shopping area looked very attractive but additional floral work was required to maximise the full potential of your beautiful market town.
- Although the opportunities to enhance the traffic islands may be restricted by legislation, more height & bolder planting would significantly improve their appearance.
- Your presentation covered most of the aspects of the Bloom Competition. Consider a visit to the retail park as another facet of business activity.

SECTION B

- Continue to develop the educational aspects of Welland Park & especially the habitats associated with the river.
- There is clearly a rich heritage associated with your historic market town. There are clear links with the Civil War, commerce & historic buildings. Continue to develop the historic potential with interpretation boards & information leaflets.
- The authority has an impressive recycling rate of 53.7% for 2008/09 and this is supported in the portfolio. Keep up this good work & use every opportunity during the tour to elaborate with facts and figures.

SECTION C

- Do to the fact that schools had already broken up for the summer holidays, the judges weren't able to see the community efforts made by schools. Consider requesting an earlier judging date next year.
- Continue to develop the community aspect of the business sector.
- Harborough clearly excels with media coverage. Continue to seek every opportunity to develop public inclusion and awareness.

A=86 B=43 C=41 TOTAL 170

SLEAFORD (3rd): Silver Gilt Award - 155 points

Judged on 16th July 2009

*** Judges Award: Rauceby Banks - a fantastic restoration project involving the whole community.**

Sleaford once again looked a picture for the judge's visit. Sleaford's small but extremely dedicated bloom team had managed to create a real difference to the town through their hard work and effort. Colourful baskets and troughs adorned the town centre and the fantastic transformation project at Rauceby Banks is well worth a visit. Sleaford continues to go from strength to strength and is always a pleasure to visit.

Judge: John Simpson

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Sleaford cemetery for its outstanding maintenance and management
- Residential areas were maintained to a good standard. Highlights being oakdene and the almshouses.
- Impressive maintenance at the edge of town Business Park. Particularly the effort made by the staff at the sleep & go.

SECTION B

- The fantastic restoration of Rauceby Banks, which has involved local bloom members, children, environment agency, town and district councils, Highways, arts and more.
- The virtual absence of litter and graffiti in the town centre is partly down to the pro-active work of Phil and Mike, the local town warden and P.C.O
- The impressive number of new benches around the town which have been sponsored by the rotary club and Sleaford tigers. The new fencing around the war memorial makes a tremendous difference.

SECTION C

- The bloom display in the library window really catches the eye.
- The well presented portfolio captures the year round efforts of the town
- The wide number of people and partners who have helped with the Rauceby Banks project

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Some of the troughs are of poor quality and distract from the impact of the plants. Notably those at the war memorial and nr monument gardens.
- Some baskets were still visible. Try using more vigorous trailing plants.

SECTION B

- Very little was mentioned about recycling and a visit to a recycling centre would be good.
- A visit to a local school to see how they contribute to the bloom effort would be appreciated.
- The stretch of the river by the leisure centre was badly polluted by litter.

SECTION C

- Make more effort to show how the young people of Sleaford engage with bloom.
- Show examples of any initiatives to tackle issues such as graffiti and litter.

A=76 B=39 C=40 TOTAL 155

MELTON MOWBRAY: Silver Gilt Medal Award - 150 points

Judged on 10th July 2009

*** Judges Award: For the high quality of horticultural design achieved across a range of community planting schemes, from town baskets to the Memorial flower beds**

In only their third year of entry to the East Midlands in Bloom competition, Melton in Bloom have reached the standard of Silver Gilt medal. This has been achieved by the exceptional efforts of dedicated volunteers working cooperatively with all local agencies in an extensive range of community improvement schemes. The town is enjoying significant benefits from these projects. It appeared to the judges that for this valuable initiative to be sustained regular financial grants are required with support from the local Council to encourage further progress. The judges really appreciated the enthusiastic and very well organised judging tour.

Judges: Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The judges were impressed by the countless community initiatives employing good, thoughtful horticultural design, e.g. at Gretton court, St Marys Church and in the Town Estate Parks. The colour coordination of the baskets and three tiered planters in the town centre was excellent, as were the sponsored roundabouts on the Leicester Road.

SECTION B

- Partnership working at the Melton Country Park is commendable, also the excellent restoration of the Priors close and Horse Wash and building of the bridge joining the

two parks. The quality of hard landscaping and tree planting in the High Street Rotary Scheme is very good. Also the excellent project to repave the memorial gardens terrace with stone salvaged from the old railway station. In addition the excellent "Big Picture" fundraising scheme, showed results in further restoration of the historic infrastructure of the Town Parks.

SECTION C

- The judges admired the organisational approach, where the Bloom groups appears to be a catalyst in helping to release the resources of a much wider range of services and volunteers to benefit the community projects. Also, the resourcefulness of the group and their creativity in accessing available funds for projects.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Continue works in progress – especially in the Town Estate Parks. Reintroduce the private garden competition. Consider how the entrances and boundaries to car parks can be improved by planting schemes and how the long boundary wall to Iceland could be brightened up by floral hay mangers or similar style plantings. The provision of more of the excellent three tiered planters in the town centre would be very visually effective, especially if complemented by a little more strategic tree planting or the provision of taller evergreen shrubs in containers to "green up" the town centre all year round.

SECTION B

- It is suggested that the advice and support of the County Wildlife Trust is sought for the Darcy Gardens natural habitat management. Also consider involving more children in the planting of sponsored bulbs, on mass, at highly visible locations throughout the town for spring displays. The town would also benefit from a higher standard of verge cutting and gutter maintenance as finances permit.

SECTION C

- Continue to develop closer relationships with the Council and other bodies, to ensure that the mutual benefit arising from these initiatives are understood and appreciated. Develop further engagement with young people and youth groups. Increase efforts to raise awareness of the campaign e.g. posters, car stickers, fundraising events etc. Where possible provide interpretation information to add interest for public to the projects being completed.

A=72 B=38 C=40 TOTAL 150

BELPER: Silver Medal Award – 148 points

Judged on 14th July 2009

*** Judges Award: The quality of landscaping and community spirit involved in the Meadow Court Elderly Persons complex**

Belper has the wonderful advantage of being set within the beautiful countryside of the Derwent Valley. The Belper in Bloom campaign which is fully supported by the cooperative action of the District and Town councils working with community groups, is making the town a most pleasant place to live, visit and do business.

The changed marking criteria this year plus the current redevelopment of the Belper Riverside gardens has influenced the results of this tour.

Judges: Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The large numbers of well planted and colour coordinated baskets and tiered planters throughout the town designed by the Towns grounds staff. Also the very well presented,

attractive memorial gardens, Beaurepaire and St Johns chapel grounds . In addition, the quality of many residential gardens (Wyver Lane) and business premises e.g MacDonald's and Morrison's.

SECTION B

- The judges appreciated the initiatives by the volunteer Belper Friends group within the car park wildflower borders and the work of the Friends at the adjacent Belper Deer Park. Wildlife trust volunteers are working hard at the Wyver lane LNR. Also the immaculately clean and well managed recycling site. The interpretation of heritage and wildlife across the town is good and improving. The poetry trail is an unusual and brilliant idea, well executed.

SECTION C

- Business sponsorship levels show good support from this sector of the community. Evidence of local press and radio involvement on the tour was appreciated. The quality of Mill View and Meadow Court developments warrant consideration for separate entries into a future year's neighbourhood category.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Review the design of "The Triangle" to incorporate possible repaving and new seating with more emphasise on shade/ drought tolerant permanent planting. Enhance the landscaping of the roundabout at the town approach by incorporating more colourful sustainable planting in situ instead of the summer containers. Strive for consistent colour schemes between Town and District floral provision. Restore the front garden competition to stimulate residents involvement in Bloom. Encourage Focus to achieve a similar standard of maintenance as their neighbours Morrison's.

SECTION B

- Scope exists for improved weed control in some paved areas. Continue to improve the quality of hard landscaping/ street furniture in the town to the standard of the best the town already has.

SECTION C

- Review methods for encouraging more members of the local community to get involved in the organisation and delivery of the "Bloom". Consider acknowledging business sponsorship on site to promote future support. Also provide more information on all year round community participation in each section of the marking criteria e.g children planting spring flowering bulbs.
- Support Milford in Bloom to enter East Midlands in Bloom next year

A=78 B=37 C=33 TOTAL 148

SPALDING: Silver Medal Award – 147 points

Judged on 16th July 2009

*** Judges Award: - West Marsh Road Recycling Centre. – an immaculate site with an exceptional 83% recycling rate**

Once again the visit to Spalding was a delight. The visit started at the delightful Ayscoughfee Hall followed by a walk along the well maintained river banks and into the colourful town centre. The tour then moved to the impressive Springfield's Retail Shopping Outlet which now boasts a water feature that moves in time with music. The highlight of the tour was the visit to West Marsh Road Recycling Depot. 83% of all material taken to the site is recycled. An innovative scheme which rewards people who take their green waste to the site is to be commended. After five visits you get a free bag of compost back.

Judge: John Simpson

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The outstanding maintenance and grounds of Springfield's retail shopping outlet

- The large number of floral baskets adorning the town shopping area. The impact and quality of maintenance on residential front gardens

SECTION B

- The immaculate West Marsh Road recycling depot and its impressive levels of recycling. The virtual absence of litter and graffiti within the town
- Vernatts Nature Reserve is a fantastic resource which is available to school parties, residents and visitors.

SECTION C

- The high level of support from local businesses who have embraced the bloom initiative. The message of bloom is being well publicised through the use of the press and community magazines.
- The year round effort towards the bloom campaign is evident

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Consider reducing the amount of seasonal planting carried out at Ayscoughfee Hall
- Bedding immediately prior to entering Ayscoughfee Hall was struggling under the trees, consider using shade tolerant bedding or the use of shrubs tolerant to poor light conditions.
- Consider including a visit to a school to show how the young people of Spalding engage with the bloom initiative.

SECTION B

- Consider making more mention of Spalding's heritage.
- Try to include more evidence of campaigns to tackle such issues as graffiti, dog fouling, litter etc. particularly young people's involvement.
- Consider providing interpretation boards at the Vernatts Nature Reserve

SECTION C

- Try to encourage greater community involvement
- Consider showing more evidence within the portfolio of ongoing projects

A=76 B=33 C=38 TOTAL 147

LONG EATON: Silver Medal Award – 139 points

Judged on 16th July 2009

*** Judges Award: For the superb wildlife contribution of Wilsthorpe Allotment site**

Long Eaton provided an interesting tour which displayed lots of enthusiasm and ideas for the future. The judges sensed that whilst resources of the Bloom team are very limited they are working very creatively with the community to help meet the criteria of the Bloom Competition. With greater support the direction presently being followed could well lead to greater successes.

Judges: Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Library sensory gardens and seasonal bedding displays. West park, children's design a flower bed competition in conjunction with Brackenfield School . The well designed new herbaceous beds on the park , the good quality of seasonal plant material produced from Council nursery. The well designed and maintained landscaping surround the Civic centre and the very attractive sensory garden at Long Eaton School.

SECTION B

- Judges appreciated the use of Heritage imagery by Erewash Partnership initiative on the boarded empty shops. The Wilsthorpe Road allotment Natural area including pond. Plus the Oaks and Acorns project at the Long Eaton School. Eliminating use of peat and use of biological control in the Nursery. Judges were pleased to hear about the Park footpath resurfacing programme which is urgently needed.

SECTION C

- The judges liked the design a flower competition and the schools involvement plus the 'adopt a park' scheme. The Long Eaton Schools Eco initiatives and the Oak and Acorn

partnership. It was good to hear the Erewash in Bloom competition was expanding. The Long Eaton Horticultural society and their very active group and their encouragement of children. The new tree trail signs and leaflets.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Explore idea of creating a “design group” that will help develop a more contemporary mixed planting style within areas of Seasonal bedding. Create a phased programme for the gradual renewal of tired shrubberies, e.g library borders, West park etc. Use ground cover planting and bark mulching to replace the excessive use of herbicides. Encourage the business community in partnership with the Council to increase the floral impact in the Town centre.

SECTION B

- Tesco’s Environmental improvement scheme, interpretive panels are needed to explain the names in the paving. Plant architecturally interesting plants in the raised turfed areas to help screen the cars parking. Future judging routes need snagging before the tour to identify litter hotspots. Consider a small wildflower meadow area in St Lawrence Churchyard.

SECTION C

- Enlist the help of the local press to encourage “nominated” Garden competition entries. Explore extending the involvement of local children in the parks flower bed designs. Develop the varied groups of volunteers with a coherent Bloom Group that is able to influence future direction and possible avenues of funding. For next year consider further separate entries from neighbours and schools.

A=68 B=34 C=37 TOTAL 139

DRONFIELD: Silver Medal Award – 136 points

Judged on 9th July 2009

***Judges Award: The Friends of Dronfield Railway Station for their voluntary work undertaken**

The judges were met by Frank Smith and Councillor Doug Oxspring. The weather was glorious throughout the judging period. A superb pictorial presentation was laid on at the Civic Hall with displays of the many community projects being undertaken in Dronfield. Judging commenced at the Library followed by visits to the shopping precinct, new sports hall, Dronfield Junior School, Lea Brook Valley & the enchanting Chantry Hotel.

Judges: Doug Stacey and Tim Sharp

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- There are over eighty hanging baskets strategically placed on lampposts around the town. These provide a pleasing addition to the town.
- The permanent planting & bedding at the Chantry Hotel is up to its usual high standard. Public house baskets and planting displays were also good.
- A visit to Dronfield railway station was a real treat as there was good evidence of quality bedding and some very good permanent planting.

SECTION B

- The introduction to the tour in the form of display boards gave a good insight into the environmental achievements made in Dronfield.
- The conservation work at Lea Brook Valley & Riverside Nature Reserve is to be commended.
- We were very pleased to hear and see the very positive evidence of recycling in Dronfield.

SECTION C

- The collaboration of the Town Council & Probationary Services has resulted in an exemplary standard within the town’s cemetery.

- The voluntary work at Lea Brook headed by Norman Crowson is most worthy of note.
- The support for Dronfield In Bloom given by the press has clearly made an impact in public awareness of this competition.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Although the general standard of maintenance was good, there was evidence of weeds and some shrub beds appeared tired and in need of rejuvenation.
- We made interesting visits to business and commercial premises. However, these should be encouraged to enhance their grounds with additional landscape work and attention to maintenance.
- Bedding schemes require height for definition. Consider the use of dot plants or permanent planting for added impact.

SECTION B

- Consider greater vigilance regarding tackling graffiti at Lea Brook. Closer adherence to the Management Plan would also assist in the conservation work being undertaken.
- Additional interpretation boards at conservation sites would help with the environmental education associated with these areas.
- The judges were pleased to hear Dronfield's proposals to further cement its links with its Industrial past.

SECTION C

- Continue to develop community awareness regarding the aims and aspirations of Dronfield In Bloom.
- Pursue your aim of engaging with the commercial sector.
- Continue to work with local schools on an environmental and conservation front.

A=71 B=33 C=32 TOTAL 136

ILKESTON: Silver Medal Award – 130 points

Judged on 16th July 2009

*** Judges Award: Hallam Fields Junior School - excellent school grounds, vegetable garden and very knowledgeable and enthusiastic students**

Ilkeston has many fine old buildings, a lovely park and many fine residential gardens. The judges were impressed by good work at Hallam Fields Junior School and the excellent straws Bridge Nature Reserve at the hub of the Great Northern Greenways project. Such projects as these can be the foundation for the successful development of Ilkeston in Bloom Campaign.

Judges: Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The Bulls Head public house for their colourful summer displays and contribution to brightening up the local area. The residential gardens in Ilkeston were of a high standard. Victoria Park its facilities and mature trees and newly refurbished tree trail plus the plans to replant the herbaceous borders. The well maintained Museum gardens. The all year round interest of the White Lion square traffic island.

SECTION B

- The judges were impressed with the Straws Bridge LNR and how it is linking in with the Great Northern Greenways project. The very good hard landscaping in the market place and the quality of the street furniture and the cleanliness of the Market Square considering it was market day. The multi waste recycling hubs that were located around the town.

SECTION C

- The excellent work at the Hallam Fields Eco School. The efforts of the Friends of the museum gardens in replanting works. The impact of the local residents in the high maintenance of their front gardens. The fund raising success of the Cemetery friends group to secure £53,000 to restore the cemetery and install interpretation and new gates.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Victoria Park would benefit from the creation of the Erewash Design group to enhance the impact of the floral displays check planting densities and ensure the soil levels in the main floral beds are topped up. Research and install interpretation material for the grass maze in the museum gardens. Consider the height of seasonal plantings in front of the Town Hall to ensure maximum visual effect. Review both the location, suitability for job and the plant selection within the Market place planters. Consider the addition of trees to the Dunelm store shrub border. Enlist local business help to increase the level of floral displays in the town centre, through sponsorship or directly enhancing their own properties.

SECTION B

- Show more examples of these judging criteria in this section. Explore opportunities for further interpretation at Straws Bridge within the car park area. Review improvements to town car parks appearance near the town hall, including the replanting of the dying tree.

SECTION C

- Market traders have highlighted the need for more floral displays in the Market Square, consider more visible baskets and multi tiered planters and where they are sited. Involve children and community groups in the Victoria Park planting works and Spring bulb planting. On future tours arrange to see more community project participation.

A=67 B=35 C=28 TOTAL 130

NEWARK: Bronze Medal Award – 110 points

Judged on 6th July 2009

***Judges Award: The outstanding contribution the residents of Howes Court have made in improving their environment**

The judges met the committee in the Town Hall known as the "Butter Market" situated within the Market Place. We were greeted with an introduction to the forthcoming tour with reference made to the progress Newark had made in setting up a small but ambitious Bloom Committee. The tour began in the Market Place where clouds soon began to gather followed by a torrential storm. When judging recommenced, we took in visits to Howes Court, Beaumont Gardens, Hawton Allotments & Sconce & Devon Park.

Judges: Tim Sharp & John Simpson

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The general upkeep of the grounds of Mary Magdalene Church is most commendable. The themed trough planting was a welcoming sight.
- The community effort made at Howes Court shows what can be achieved by self help.
- The allotment site at Hawton Road appeared well used by local residents, schools and disabled users. Composting and water butts were clearly evident.

SECTION B

- The judges were impressed by the scale and breadth of recycling exercised by the District Council.
- Both judges were encouraged with the conservation work being undertaken at Hawton Holt & Devon Park nature reserve.
- Both judges commented on the absence of litter & graffiti. Street furniture and hard landscaped areas were also well maintained.

SECTION C

- The judges were heartened by the news that a Bloom Committee was initiated earlier this year with the inclusion of the Councils, local organisations, voluntary groups & avid gardeners.
- It was encouraging to note that Newark's Councils and Bloom Committee had approached the Newark Advertiser, Newark Times and Boundary Sound in order to promote the Bloom initiative.

- As a direct result of Newark In Bloom, there have been increased entries in the annual gardening competition.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- There were areas around the town where the lack of baskets or alternative bedding displays detracted from the overall standard of presentation.
- Bedding displays need to have the dimension of height with more defined and varied use of foliage and flowering plants.
- The judges would have liked to have seen more evidence of new or reworked permanent planting schemes.

SECTION B

- The judges would have appreciated a visit to a local school and the cemetery in order to appreciate the environmental & conservation work being undertaken there.
- Perhaps the Bloom Committee & Councils could look into the feasibility of encouraging the use of more mulching to shrub beds in order to enhance their appearance and conserve moisture.
- There were a number of locations around the town where weeds in gullies & building bases were evident.

SECTION C

- Both judges felt that Newark needed to pursue and engage with local businesses in order to increase participation & develop sponsorship opportunities.
- We would like to think that Newark will continue to develop community led initiatives and perhaps take on new landscape & environmental projects.
- Consider expanding the tour to include more residential areas.

A=60 B=25 C=25 TOTAL 110

GAINSBOROUGH: Certificate of Achievement – 52 points

Judged on 6th July 2009

Gainsborough is a first time entrant into the competition. The town has the potential to in time to flourish and achieve success. The Town has a long journey ahead of them but with the enthusiasm of Paul Leader they have someone who will make that journey successful. We look forward to seeing the Towns progress in the coming years

Judge: John Simpson

The judge was particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- Marshalls Yard. This new commercial development had been well thought out with modern water features, excellent paving, and seating, complemented by a good mix of seasonal and permanent planting.
- The renovation of the glasshouse at Richmond Park, complete with modern water feature.
- The grounds of Gainsborough old hall were well maintained with a good mix of planting.

SECTION B

- Seating and litter bins on Richmond Park were plentiful and of a reasonable standard.
- The quality of the seating and planting at Gainsborough old hall was good.

SECTION C

- The efforts of the friends group at Richmond Park.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Try to encourage business support within the Town. Very little evidence of Bloom was seen in the Town.
- Try to reduce the overzealous use of herbicide. Many areas suffered from overuse resulting on Richmond Park where large numbers of seasonal bedding plants had been lost and lawn edges were disappearing.

- Try to show how the community are engaging with the bloom initiative.

SECTION B

SECTION C

- Set up a Bloom Committee to help drive forward the Gainsborough in Bloom effort.
- Try to show links with local schools and young people.
- Produce a portfolio showing evidence of year round activity, and any publicity or press material.

A=32 B=13 C=7

TOTAL 52