

Congratulations to everyone entering the 2010 East Midlands in Bloom Competition!

East Midlands in Bloom is the regional competition of 'Britain in Bloom' and has been running for approximately 35 years. The campaign focuses on the three RHS core pillars of horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation. EMiB have a dedicated team of committee members and judges who give up their time voluntarily to assist with 'In Bloom' events. All are highly experienced in horticulture and are available for a free advisory visit which can be arranged by contacting us.

East Midlands in Bloom will have a Seminar on 16th February 2011 which will be held at the Strutts Centre, Belper Derbyshire to which everyone is welcome to attend. More details will be available on our website: www.eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk and through our annual mailshot which will be sent out later in the year. Please get in touch if you wish to be added to our mailing list.

The Committee and Judges thank you for making superb efforts to the 'In Bloom' Campaign this year and wish you all the best in 2011.

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.

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CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

General Comments

This category provides a new challenge for communities that have proved to be sustained Gold Award achievers in the past.

Entrants are nominated and invited to compete against each other by the EMiB judges regardless of the population size of the entry. There is much at stake for those accepting the invitation, and it was pleasing to find that all involved had risen to the challenge magnificently. The standard of competition was consistently and extremely high – each entrant amply showcasing examples of best practice to others.

Judges had to employ fine measures of assessment between very close competitors. All are to be congratulated upon the excellent standards achieved - each one a real source of pride for EMiB.

Judges – Doug Stacey and Sharon Thomas

MARKET BOSWORTH:

Large Village; Electoral population 1,001-2,500; 1 hr 30 minutes Judging Tour

Gold Award and Category Winner – 183 points

Judged on 9th July

*** Judges Award:** The Dixie School Collaboration

A very well coordinated volunteer base creating a strong sense of community, the In Bloom Group have a presence in all community events taking place in Market Bosworth, helping others to progress as well as receiving support; a great sense of community cohesion. Standards at Market Bosworth are outstanding, managing to attain an appropriate balance between floral and formal displays in a rural location, they are very conscious of their local heritage with appropriate references throughout the village.

SECTION A

- Overall Bosworth in Bloom are making a great impact in the village, with landscape and floral features, complemented by efforts by local businesses, institutions and residents; all are maintained to a very high standard.
- Winter/Spring displays must bring a welcome splash of colour particularly on Park Street

SECTION B

- The Country Park is maintained to a very high standard, the innovative toilet block causing little impact on the environment.
- The wildflower meadow was developing well with special support from the Natural History Society monitoring flora and fauna.
- The engagement with young people was especially noted in respect of developing the bird feeding stations and sensory garden.
- Market Bosworth was found to be spotless. The judges were astounded by the absence of any litter, detritus, graffiti, fly posting or dog fouling, a great credit to the community, supported by litter picks and other campaigns in the community.

SECTION C

- Impressive levels of community awareness of the Bloom Campaign and its objectives, brought about by good press coverage, publicity material and events, not least the evidence on the ground of how In Bloom is benefitting Market Bosworth.
- The judges were impressed by the work carried out in partnership with students from Dixie Grammar School; the children gained real experience of the conceptual design process and both students and community benefitted from the final design.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

- Whilst the red and white floral displays were highly appropriate colour choices both for heritage and the world cup, careful consideration must be given to any contrasting colour

schemes. The orange/gold begonias made a super display, however they didn't quite synchronise with the red and white.

- In the Memorial Gardens the current practices of a more relaxed approach to pruning and infilling of gaps with hardy perennials were an improvement; however there is still scope for improvement in this area.

SECTION B

- In the Country Park it would be nice to see the wildflower meadow extended to the boundaries of the amenity grassed area, particularly under the mature treescape.
- Lampposts in the market square would benefit from painting.
- We were encouraged to see peat free compost was being trialled, but there seemed to be some disappointment with the results. It should be noted there are various peat free compost products available and this should be explored.

SECTION C

- Consideration could be given to providing a 2/3 year project plan in the portfolio; this would help focus volunteer energy and funding potential and in-kind donations for the future.
- Judges were pleased to see the increasing initiatives being taken to involve schools; their developing participation should be encouraged.

A = 94 B = 44 C = 45 Total = 183

CLEETHORPES:

Coastal Resort (Large); Electoral population 12,001 and over; 3 hours Judging Tour

Gold Award – 182 points

Judged on 13th July

***Judges Award: Cleethorpes** – To the 'In Bloom' Committee for supporting the Gated Alleyway Scheme

Cleethorpes is a progressive entry where the standards have been rising each year leading to numerous awards. Past improvements are being sustained, current ones are imaginative and exciting, and plans continue to be laid for the future. Greater involvement with children is welcome, and the initiatives by local residents to transform gated alleyways are inspiring. Altogether an excellent entry.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The colourful impact of extensive floral bedding planted appropriately for a seaside town.
- The improvements to permanently planted areas and overall high standards of maintenance.
- Along Kingsway it was good to meet Mr Feltz who over the past two years has personally contributed big improvements to his own garden and adjacent gardens in this important location along the main promenade.
- The main greenway verges leading into town were beautifully maintained, giving a wonderful first impression of Cleethorpes.

SECTION B

- Cleethorpes has considerable responsibility for extensive areas of natural landscape, four and a half miles of beach, and large numbers of visitors especially in the holiday season. Despite this, evidence of very good maintenance exists with award winning beach management, excellent nature conservation policies and extremely high standards of cleanliness.
- The judges especially admired the heritage art in the landscape, children's involvement at the adopted Bursar School garden, the Cleethorpes Children's Centre and the promotional campaigning work of the Recycling Team.

SECTION C

- The Bloom Campaign has a very high profile in the town fostered by a close association with the local press, events, the decorated open top bus and the Tonka Train etc. This has all engendered pride and involvement in the Bloom.

- The organisation and presentation of the portfolio, itinerary and judging tour was managed exceedingly well, giving the best possible impression of Cleethorpes.
- One of the most inspiring aspects of the tour was to see the transformation of the gated alleyways at several locations.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Maybe a quibble, but it would be good to find a solution to the problem of wear either side of the waterfall.
- It was pleasing to note the extensive mulching of shrub borders; this should be continued at High Cliff after some replanting/gapping up of tired shrubberies.
- The judges agree it would be a good idea to dispense with the grass under the Cordylines on Kings Road, and under plant with sub tropical shrubs.
- Consider relieving the overlarge areas of bleak tarmac car parking at Haverstoe Park, with occasional clumps of trees.

SECTION B

- Again a quibble because the general standard of street furniture was very good, but scope exists to improve the appearance of some of the bins and lamp posts in the town.
- Ensure that on site expertise is fully utilised when re-writing the management plan for the country park.

SECTION C

- Whilst there is good involvement in the Bloom, it was felt that scope exists to extend the range of community year-round events, which would show a diverse press/portfolio montage.

A=93 B=45 C=44 TOTAL 182

OAKHAM:

Town; Electoral population 6,001-12,000; 2 hours Judging Tour

Gold Award – 182 points

Judged on 8th July

♥ **Britain in Bloom ‘Local Roots Award’** – For making references in their landscape projects to their unique local history

♥ **East Midlands in Bloom Award for the Best New Permanent Landscaping Scheme** - The Prairie Garden Design

★ **Judges Award:** Oakham - Mill Street Floral Displays

This is a highly progressive entry, earlier completed projects are being well maintained, and current ones are achieving high standards of design and implementation. Plans exist to continue improvement schemes in and around the town. The quality of both seasonal and permanent planting is high and the input of volunteers impressive. Standards of cleanliness are also very impressive.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- This section scored high marks reflecting the very high standards being achieved in both the seasonal and permanent planting schemes.
- Local residents and businesses made a very good contribution to this achievement.
- Particular praise must be given to the Prairie garden developed over recent months outside the front of the Library.
- The Mill Street displays were exquisite, showing seasonal bedding planters at their very best.

SECTION B

- The further development of the woodland at Gorse Field Wood has received impressive support from the community, and is now a popular destination for recreation and education.
- The adjacent Brooke Hill School has many environmental initiatives and should be encouraged to enter the Schools Competition.

- Local heritage is displayed at several locations including the roundabouts, the bypass and the museum garden.
- The levels of recycling being achieved were impressive as were the high levels of cleanliness throughout the area.

SECTION C

- It is an achievement for the group to be working at a strategic level with partners, such as being represented on the Local Strategic Partnership Environmental Group. This type of influence can be fundamental in receiving the support and guidance for a successful future.
- Due to the high level of activity, publicity and partnership working by Oakham In Bloom, high levels of funding and support for the campaign have been achieved. This includes success in achieving significant grants and in-kind help on major projects

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Encourage the owner of the Odd House Tavern to provide complementary planting on his premises to reflect that on the roundabout.
- Consider providing barrier basket planting on the railings around the same junction.

SECTION B

At this point the Judges can only quibble on small points.

- One or two areas of weeds in paving were observed e.g. under the planters on Melton Rd level crossing and around the raised bed outside Rutland Radio. (see portfolio).
- Once perennial weeds have been eradicated ensure that permanent planted beds are mulched, for example at Odd House roundabout and similar.

SECTION C

- Again all activities in this section are scoring highly; continue to be innovative whilst maintaining this excellent standard of work.

A=92 B=45 C=45 TOTAL 182

MANSFIELD:

Small City; Electoral population 35,001-100,000; 3 hours Judging Tour

Gold Award – 170 points

Judged on 7th July

***Judges Award:** Mansfield – Rufford Island Bed Design

Mansfield has a strong sense of community cohesion, led by good corporate support and an understanding of the benefits generated from a successful campaign.

A good impression of growing community involvement, with improvements, and planning for further improvement.

Very clean for the size of the town, reflecting a sense of pride of place by the people of Mansfield.

The judges were particularly impressed by:

SECTION A

- The quality and quantity of planting throughout the town.
- Rufford Island permanent landscaping has been executed to a high standard of design and presentation.
- The community bulb plantings have been a significant achievement.
- The town centre tree replacements have transformed the appearance of the main shopping area for the better, which allowed the floral displays to be shown off to their best.
- It is encouraging to see ongoing improvements with volunteer groups in parks.

SECTION B

- The level of biodiversity in the District of a high standard, in particular Oak Tree Heath gaining a Green Flag, the presence of strong partnership working, management plans and volunteer commitment.
- Local heritage was depicted in an appropriate way throughout the Town.

- The standard of cleanliness, good quality furniture and artwork.
- Local Communities have a real sense of Pride.

SECTION C

- Increasing number of community groups participating, with good evidence of year round involvement, having ongoing projects and future developments in mind.
- Good diversionary activities on Fisher Lane Park which have been funded in an innovative and impressive way.

Areas suggested for future development:

SECTION A

- Continue to plant labour saving attractive ground cover planting in parks beds and borders, replacing any damaged planting as soon as possible. E.g. Carr Bank
- Explore different ways of encouraging private businesses to replace/renew permanent planting which has become tired/over mature.
- Encourage sponsorship company to be as proactive as possible to gain further sponsorship around the District to gain additional high quality landscaping.

SECTION B

- Continue to progress the green waste collection service throughout the District.
- Consider using composted green waste as a mulch and soil improver in parks where possible.

SECTION C

- Develop stronger links with schools, for example encourage entries into the painting competition and school gardens competition, e.g. King Edwards School.
- Encourage communities to participate in the neighbourhoods section of In Bloom, such as the Oak Tree Estate.
- Consider wider community participation in the management of the Bloom Campaign by introducing a Mansfield in Bloom steering group.

A=86 B=43 C=41 TOTAL 170