

REPORTS
EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM 2013

From the Chairman:

“2013 has been another excellent year for East Midlands in Bloom, with 55 main ‘In-Bloom’ entries (several being completely new to Blooming) and 135 It’s Your Neighbourhood groups coming forward for assessment (another significant increase). We had excellent participation in the Special Awards for School Gardens, Pubs and Hotels, Retail and Commercial participants and Domestic Front Gardens. Children’s art and Photography entries were rather lower, and I encourage you to engage with schools and young persons’ groups in your communities to get greater participation in this most beneficial activity.

2014 is the Golden Jubilee year for Britain in Bloom, and there will be a range of celebratory activities which I hope that you will join in with; details of these will be announced in the Newsletter in the autumn, and once again at the biennial New Entrants Workshop taking place in Immingham on 20th February. This will also be further detailed in the Newsletter.

My aim for 2014 is to reach a record main Bloom entry of at least 60 communities, and increase IYN participation to at least 150 groups. To achieve this we will all have to promote the Bloom anywhere and everywhere that we can over the next few months. We ‘Bloomers’ know that it is the best community campaign that there is, bringing people together to improve their local areas; our challenge is to make sure that as many other places as possible also get the chance to reap the benefits that Bloom brings!

I look forward to seeing you all again next year, when I hope that a golden summer such as the one we have just had will complement the Jubilee of Bloom”

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LARGE CITY

- 🏆 **Nottingham: Gold Award and Category Winner 172 points**
 - 🏆 **EMiB Award for Horticultural Excellence within Parks – Nottingham University Grounds**
 - 🏆 **EMiB Committee Award – Councillor Malcolm Wood for services to Nottingham in Bloom**
 - **Judges Award – Garden Volunteers at Brewhouse Yard**
- Judged on 4th July Judges – Peter Benham and Alan Fletcher

This year the Bloom route covered Sherwood where we saw examples of how community art can support the Bloom. There were examples of some intricate community mosaics showing the history of Woodthorpe Grange; also to the entrance pillars of the Cook shop, which depicts edible plants. In Sherwood High Street Yarn Bombing (Guerilla knitting) decorated the street furniture, trees and even included a woollen hanging basket. There were also attractively painted murals on the buildings at the Young Potential Garden.

There appeared to be a watery theme to the tour, with sponsored vehicles to transport water to floral features, roadside rain gardens to cope with flash floods, city centre fountains, canal management and the many uses of water in the landscape at the University.

The annual floral displays in the City Centre, Castle Grounds and the University were of a high standard and it was a pleasure to meet some of the sponsors, partners and enthusiastic volunteers that make Nottingham Bloom.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

As last year the floral highlights at the Castle Grounds (particularly the carpet beds and the 3D Knight on Horseback) were excellent and maintained to a very standard. The roadside bedding displays at Goose Fair Island and the North entrance flower bed at University are of a high quality and must brighten many a travellers' day. The plots at Woodthorpe allotments were a good example of a well-managed site with crops in abundance. We were impressed with the work and dedication at the Young Potential particularly as the funding of the project has not been consistent each year.

It was also pleasing to see the continuation of support from BID to support the Floral Trail initiative.

Nottingham has many areas of green space and it is very heartening to see the rejuvenation of the Forest Recreation Ground and the recent improvements in Woodthorpe Park. Special note must also go to the high standards of design and presentation of the Millennium garden at the University.

SECTION B

There were many good examples where we saw at first hand wildflower areas and nature conservation integrated with green space management. The work of the clean team is transforming areas of the city with reductions in the amount of gum and use of compacting litter bins. The Sherwood area community arts project is creating a stronger identity for the area and has involved many members of community. The new rain garden project is being piloted to reduce the instances of flooding and if successful could see the way roads are engineered and improve the appearance of our streets. As the scheme is expanded it could also support new tree planting schemes and greatly assist the strategy to increase the tree canopy of the City.

SECTION C

The route was changed from last year focussing on the Sherwood area of the City, underlining the breath of the Nottingham in Bloom Campaign. Many of the projects we saw were also fairly new, showing the continued local interest in the Bloom. With a spread of over thirty sponsors who support the Bloom campaign it has strong sustainability for the future. This year the Bloom worked closely with Armed Forces Day to provide new opportunities, additional support and reach out to new audiences. The use of the very popular "Fearless" the turf lion was a good way to engage with the public at events. The campaign manages to achieve good media and publicity coverage supplemented by individual Facebook links. Businesses are encouraged to judge competitions and many are involved through volunteer days to undertake practical work. Schemes such as the Brewhouse Yard volunteers are also a good way to encourage first time gardeners and create pride in the City.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The involvement from a school and a local IYN residents group would be a useful addition to the route. We were told that Council used to have a Best Allotment Competition and maybe representatives from the leased allotments associations could take active ownership of the competition and rotate judging. Efforts could also be made to contact interested groups to assist with the maintenance of the Rockery within the Castle Grounds. The Nottingham Alpine Garden Society may be a source of assistance.

SECTION B

Across the City the tram network is being extended. It is hoped that this green travel initiative might kick start ideas about other local environmental issues and the new track routes could offer new Bloom and landscape opportunities.

Interpretation signs for the public about the community orchard and the wildflower meadows should be considered.

SECTION C

More emphasis should be given to presenting evidence to show all year round involvement. This would assist the judges and allow the work undertaken during the year to be evaluated.

We recognise the organisational difficulties, however it would also be good to see and meet more representatives from the Friends of Parks groups, community and volunteers involved with projects at the various stops.

A – 85 B – 44 C – 43 Total 172

CITIES

Mansfield: Silver Gilt Award and Category Winner 154 points

○ **Judges Award – Asquith School Eco-Club**

Judged on 9th July Judges Peter Benham and Simon Lucas

This year sees Mansfield move up a Bloom category to a City entry, as new housing developments throughout the district has increased the population. In addition a central bus station has been opened and there was evidence of building works and investment in retail development.

With the new development some additional Section 106 money has been made available to deliver new schemes within local Parks to enhance facilities.

We were very impressed with the work and support that Mansfield BID do to supplement cleaning, sponsor floral features, organise events and adopt difficult areas. Their work greatly contributes to a strong economy within the central shopping area.

During the tour we also saw the good work of friends groups and volunteers who are also playing their part locally to maintain areas, create a pleasant environment and create new opportunities.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

There was a good spread of notable improvements within the parks we visited, including new play equipment, herbaceous perennial plantings, planters, seating and path improvements.

There were a number of examples where the parks section is clearly working closely with its planning department to balance development with its needs to improve facilities. This greater understanding will have a beneficial benefit for the local environment and the community to enjoy.

During the tour we saw a number of interesting examples of community involvement at Yeoman Hill Park, St Edmunds Church Orchard, and Carr Bank. We also liked the Guardians of the Green at Appin Way who should be congratulated on their maintenance efforts of the open space. Their commitment in purchasing mowing equipment and starting to care for their area is a good example for others to follow.

Asquith School was another tour high point, with pupils who are encouraged by enthusiastic staff to grow plants in containers and incorporate gardening activities across the curriculum. We were very impressed with the children's confidence, knowledge and presentation skills. The school should be entered for the EMiB school garden competition.

SECTION B

There were a number of Heritage features we saw during the visit and it was very good to see that each one had an individual interpretation board close at hand.

At Oak Tree Heath SSSI we were impressed with the work and commitment of the volunteers and the support from the Sherwood Forest Trust. In addition support was being gained from the local supermarket to promote the group and provide a meeting room.

Some imaginative recycling packs were seen to assist schools and educate on waste. The idea of creating grime monsters from waste is a good way to engage children (and adults).

On the Little Roots allotment toddlers were making their first exploration into the natural world by collecting leaves, flowers and bugs. This receives a mixture of funding but appears very well loved by the community.

The Council uses peat free composts and has done so for many years.

SECTION C

The connection with schools being involved in local projects and parks is steadily developing. Schools could also adopt a park.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Despite the changes of verge maintenance it was good to hear that discussions are continuing with Nottinghamshire County Council to resolve difficulties and improve maintenance standards.

It would also be worthwhile to introduce some of your groups to "It's Your Neighbourhood" as they can access advice and receive recognition for their achievements.

The organising of a Bloom competition for the Best Front garden is being considered for Council Tenants; maybe if this proves a success there would be opportunity to extend the initiative. Sponsors within the area might provide prizes of goods and the previous year's winners could be the following year's judges.

SECTION B

There were a numbers of areas where street furniture was below standard. It is understood that it is a question of responsibility and it does impact on the street scene. Mansfield BID is looking at replacement funding sources, however some items could merely need a clean and paint.

SECTION C

During the presentation the judges heard how the comments from last year's judging had been tackled, however we would like to hear more details of events throughout the seasons to demonstrate your year round activity. This could be tackled under each of the four seasons and illustrated with pictures, a scrapbook of press articles and/or a short PowerPoint. Photographs ably illustrate the involvement with bulb, wildflower and tree planting, Christmas events, before and after results, competitions and publicity. There are many good stories of activities on the route and within the press release folder which had to be teased out.

It is good that you have so many things you want the judges to see, however timing of the route both onsite and travel needs to be more realistic. Regrettably some features of merit will be missed, but could briefly feature within the presentation, or referred to at other similar venues.

The Council have made efforts to create a Bloom Committee and it would be of benefit to include representatives from your community network. Mansfield in Bloom seems to be very low key and needs marketing, the web page needs updating (2012), there is no mention in press releases and no external branding on baskets, banners or sponsored beds. This might also gain you more support and sponsors.

A – 82 B – 38 C – 34 Total 154

CITIES

Northampton: Silver Award 144 points

○ Judges Award – Ekins Close Residents

Judged on 11th July Judges Peter Benham and Simon Lucas

The sun shone and so did Northampton! The judges were taken on a comprehensive tour of Northampton with a running commentary on every location by Councillor Mike Hallam showing his, and the councils, enthusiasm for the Bloom.

In the market place there was a pop-up allotment created with support by the Town Centre BID and a number of local businesses. Shoppers (and Judges) are encouraged to sample the produce.

We were met by enthusiastic members of the community ably supported by park rangers with good examples of what can be achieved with partnership working.

Northampton has many fine open spaces. The stop at Delapre Abbey to see the restoration work being carried by the Friends group within the walled garden and unearthing the former 1920's water garden underlines the strong local interest in Northampton's heritage and the desire to create a better environment for the community.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Locally sourced hanging baskets and brackets supported by Northampton BID using peat free compost. The town centre war memorial was well planted and respectful for its location.

The planting at St Andrews Hospital is outstanding. Community planting at the PHAB centre and Ekins Close are prime examples to others.

SECTION B

New developments such as the bus interchange give the town a feeling of vibrancy and growth supported by new street furniture.

Both BID's are excellent ambassadors for Northampton and supporters of the Bloom, with the Love Northampton Campaign.

24th nationally in Carbon saving, and proud of it!

Generally the route was free from litter and graffiti with one unfortunate black spot outside the Good Shepherd School.

Introduction of a mobile phone App for reporting litter.

The local heritage was reflected throughout the tour.

SECTION C

Not one but two newspapers to quiz the judges!

More schools and community groups are getting involved in environmental improvements with tremendous support from Rangers and neighbourhood wardens who obviously have a good relationship, examples seen at Abington Park & Delapre Abbey show what can be achieved.

The town centre pop-up allotment is excellent! Perhaps some more signage and information about the plants, obtaining an allotment and your bloom competitions would have enhanced the otherwise excellent feature.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Some seasonal beds within parks seemed sparse; is it a difficult season or would the ground benefit from incorporating good manure and or recycled compost to improve the soil structure?

Consider adding permanent planting to some of the seasonal displays to reduce the amount of bedding required, add height and make it go further!

SECTION B

The main town parks appear to be traditionally close mown, is there scope for less formal areas that could include wildflower meadows to the edges, under trees etc.?

The maintenance regime at Bradlaugh Fields was unknown; as this stop was perhaps the main example of biodiversity perhaps meeting with a ranger could expand the information on the area and its biodiversity.

SECTION C

A simple scrapbook of press cuttings would help to show bloom activities throughout the year. Show examples of your communication eg Floral displays competition leaflet perhaps including the front garden winner on the tour? Care should be given in choosing some of the stops along the Bloom route, as some examples could have been better presented.

Why not show the judges the Workbridge unit, it would be a good example of community inclusion and sponsorship especially with the pop up allotment?

The Northampton in Bloom groups appears to be a council and 'agencies' group. Experience has shown that inclusion of representatives of some of the community groups will strengthen the entry and give the volunteers a greater feeling of belonging and ownership of the bloom.

A – 72 B – 38 C – 34 Total 144

SMALL CITIES

Loughborough in Bloom: Gold Award and Category Winner 179 points

Judged on 9th July Judges Martin Hardy and Chris Beal

Music was the theme of the visit to Loughborough. The presentation had a musical accompaniment, the tour started with the Loughborough bells ringing in the background and finished in Queens Park with some impressive musical themed art in the landscape. In between all of the musical themes this community continues to bloom together.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The quality of Queens Park with its art in the landscape features continues to flourish.

Community gardening within the entry is very strong.

The crematorium & cemetery were of an excellent quality and judges would have liked to have spent a little more time here.

SECTION B

The quantity and quality of the wildflower meadow areas.

The sculpture displays based upon local heritage were impressive.

Quality of cleanliness throughout the town is impressive

SECTION C

The increasing number of sponsored hanging baskets ensures a sustainable future for the bloom in Loughborough.

The tour showed good use of the allotments with the Charnwood Gardening Project.

The university grounds are an asset to the community and to the bloom initiative.

It was pleasing to see that previous judges' comments had been taken on board and a wider range of the community had been met on the tour.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try and make progress with the County Council over grass cutting on verges to either increase the frequency or improve timing in relation to the judging period.

SECTION B

Have a programme of refurbishment for street furniture as some is beginning to look tired.

Show more evidence of recycling initiatives.

Look at introducing the park sculptures into the city centre to make an arts trail..

SECTION C

Continue to build upon the excellent community links that Loughborough in Bloom has.

A – 90 B – 42 C – 47 Total 179

SMALL CITIES

Grimsby: Gold Award 178 points

Judged on 2nd July Judges Martin Hardy and Chris Beal

The presentation of the bloom's year's work was given at the Town Hall. It was pleasing to see that the Council and bloom group work side by side to achieve their aims. We found it encouraging that Howard Grove residents are hoping to extend their activities to other streets in the area.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Heron Close new plantings are establishing well, with help from learning needs volunteers. We noticed new sustainable plantings on some roundabouts, but were pleased to see seasonal displays were also being continued

SECTION B

Wild flower areas are doing well with certain areas in full flower. Recycling is very good with a weekly collection being done and a 35% recycling rate

SECTION C

The new bloom festival to be held in the minster and grounds was a good idea and will hopefully present the bloom's works to more of the community

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

A drive past Peoples' Park did not allow us to look at the new rose garden plantings and would be a good inclusion on a future tour

SECTION B

Some street furniture was in need of a re-paint and tidy up

SECTION C

We found all community participation good. Keep up the good work

A – 88 B – 43 C – 47 Total 178

SMALL CITIES

Oadby and Wigston: Gold Award 177 points

Judged on 5th July Judges Martin Hardy and Chris Beal

The tour started with an excellent audio visual presentation with the Mayor at the Council Offices. Year round activities were shown and the redevelopment work at Blaby Road Park

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Replanting and landscaping to Blaby Road Park was beginning to develop. School gardening at South Wigston High School was enthusiastic with pupils showing good plant knowledge and interest.

SECTION B

Recycling of cooking oils from a roadside collection was good and working well. Recycling points and the weekly kerb collection were very good.

SECTION C

It was pleasing to see that communities all over the borough are involved in the greening of the borough initiative. We were impressed with the SEWA project of mixed multi faith communities ongoing works and their recognition with a national award.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Some empty business premises were noticed, and possibly some use could be made of the vacant land before redevelopment takes place

SECTION B

The judges are looking forward to seeing the Oadby Owl carved out of the Sequoia stump at the Council Offices.

SECTION C

There was a lack of local press coverage on the tour. Coverage was shown during the year but more would be good.

A – 89 B – 45 C – 43 Total 177

SMALL CITIES

Chesterfield: Silver Gilt Award 153 points

Judged on 10th July Judges Martin Hardy & Chris Beal

The tour around Chesterfield saw some impressive sights. The Boythorpe Allotments are an excellent example of traditional allotment gardening. The newly refurbished Eastwood Park is an excellent community facility and the Japanese garden at St Marys School was a delight to see.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The refurbishment works at Eastwood Park have been carried out to a very good standard.

The Boythorpe Allotments are an excellent example of a well-functioning allotment site.

The tiered planters in the town centre were of an excellent standard.

The newly discovered rock garden walk at Ringwood Hall adds an additional horticultural feature to the many small gardens displayed here.

SECTION B

The community has a very good recycling rate and proposed future initiatives should increase this.

The new railings around the churchyard fit well into the environment.

Although the country parks could not be visited on the tour the portfolio has highlighted the importance they play in the community and towards the environment

SECTION C

Local business support and sponsorship continues to grow.

The continued success of your Chesterfield in Bloom competition shows the support the community has for improving the environment.

This bloom entry has good engagement with schools

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

In future years if Boythorpe Cemetery is used within the tour then use the opportunity to discuss its contribution etc.

Some of the planters in the gardens opposite the Town Hall were of a lesser quality than those in the town centre.

Continue with developing further sponsorship of town centre hanging baskets

SECTION B

Judges look forward to seeing the new art in the landscape on the Horns Bridge Island in future years.

Plan a programme of street furniture refurbishment as some is beginning to look tired.

Some outlying areas on the tour (Chatsworth Road for example) need more attention to detail on litter etc.

SECTION C

Look to develop a Bloom Steering Committee using the wealth of community participation available.

Show more year round development particularly in the 15 minute presentation slot

A – 81 B – 38 C – 34 Total 153

URBAN COMMUNITIES

🏆 **The Meadows: Silver Gilt Award and Category Winner 160 points**

🏆 **Western Power Distribution EMiB Best School Garden – Greenfields School**

○ **Judges Award – Riverside and Greenfields Schools**

Judged on 4th July Judges Richard Adams and Ian Cooke

This was a delightful tour of a fascinating area that is full of interest. The many people we met on the way absolutely oozed enthusiasm and pride for their surroundings. It is wonderful to see such a community spirit in an area that not so long ago had a bad reputation. This is an amazing transformation that seems to get better each year.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The introductory video was a great lead-in to the tour and sound evidence of many activities and workshops.

The presentation by the pupils of Riverside school was a delight.

The library garden continues to look good and is well utilised.

SECTION B

The plans for the sculptures from the lime tree timber are a great achievement and the judges look forward to seeing this work complete in future years.

The judges were impressed with the overall tidiness and standards of maintenance within many areas of the tour.

SECTION C

The work at Greenfield School is commendable with obvious enthusiasm amongst staff and students. The grounds are a wonderful, well maintained resource.

Arkwright Meadows Community Garden continues to thrive and it is good to see food crops linked to various ethnic groups being grown. The wood-fired tandoori oven is a great community resource.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The Victoria Memorial Gardens really should be included on the judging tour and it was a great pity we did not get to see the refurbished rock garden.

The tour needs a floral highlight which could be the park or in future might be the Toll Bar traffic island which at the moment is lost in the tram works.

SECTION B

Is there the opportunity for more water in any part of the tour – a good sized wildlife pond?

It would be good to see the planting of some new native trees.

Is there any more heritage within the Meadows area that could in some way be highlighted?

SECTION C

More attempts should be made to get the traders in the shopping precinct involved both with sponsorship and to improve the ambience of this area.

A – 80 B – 38 C – 42 Total 160

URBAN COMMUNITIES

Evington: Silver Award 149 points

○ Judges Award – Five New IYN Groups

Judged on 1st July Judges Richard Adams and Ian Cooke

Once again, a hectic but well planned tour took the judges to many areas of interest and allowed for meeting with an amazing number of volunteers. This Bloom entry has grown from an IYN to its current activity level in a short space of time and the whole community should be proud of its environment and achievements.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The labyrinth at Linden Primary School is an interesting new development as is the new garden and pond at the Co-op.

The Village Hall gardens and baskets looked particularly attractive

The improved maintenance of the Barnaby garden has enhanced its appearance.

SECTION B

It was good to see signs of recycling in many areas, in particular the school compost going to street planters and the refurbishment and re-use of old play equipment.

In general Bloom signage is excellent and the new Arboretum leaflet is well prepared.

SECTION C

The initiation of five new It's Your Neighbourhood groups is excellent.

The ongoing widespread involvement of a broad spectrum of the community is excellent as is the evidence of year round activities.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The judges would like to see more sustainable planting in all areas including shrubs, roses and herbaceous perennials.

Bedding, although widespread lacks impact and needs more design input. Containers should be grouped and not spread so thinly and beds should be designed with a colour theme and using a much smaller range of plants.

Judges need to be shown more residential and communal gardens.

SECTION B

Do be sure to show the judges all the good areas, in particular the Arboretum, pond area in the park and Piggy's Hollow, despite the maintenance issue.

Improvement is needed on weed control particularly in gullies and paths.

SECTION C

The judges would like to see the members of the Youth Club actively involved in the maintenance of their grounds and possibly in other Bloom activities.

The judges would suggest that further attempts should be made to achieve commercial sponsorship, possibly using the funding for specific projects.

Greater use of the press in both Evington and Leicester should be explored.

A – 69 B – 37 C – 43 Total 149

URBAN COMMUNITIES

Littleover: Silver Award 138 points

○ Judges Award – the pupils and staff at St Peter’s School

Judged on 12th July Judges Richard Adams and Ian Cooke

This attractive urban community on the edge of Derby feels more like a village with pretty front gardens and colourful public houses. Considerable input to horticultural features has won this entry well deserved better marks, sadly spoiled by a general lack of street cleanliness.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The impressive allotments with their beautifully tilled rows of fruit vegetables and flowers were a joy to see. The children and staff at St Peter’s School exuded enthusiasm for the wonderful gardens and plots alongside the school.

The various planters and flowers beds in the shopping centre were greatly improved and in particular the Edible Littleover bed.

SECTION B

The scarecrow competition is a great example of ephemeral art in the community, involving lots of people and providing great fun and interest.

The new pond dipping area in Sunnydale Park is a well constructed new asset.

SECTION C

The involvement with local schools and the young people in the Scout troop is to be commended.

The portfolio, display materials and presentation were all well prepared and helpful in supporting the entry.

The organisers should be commended for achieving a good list of sponsors at a difficult time.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The judges would like to see more permanent planting; trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials to complement the seasonal bedding.

In future years include a ‘traditional park’ on the tour as well as one illustrating aspects of wildlife conservation.

More attention needs to be given to verges and open space grass areas

SECTION B

The judges would suggest that areas such as the pond and meadow would benefit from an interpretation panel explaining the wildlife benefits.

It is suggested that the heritage information printed in the portfolio would make the basis of a good publicly available Heritage Trail or another interpretation panel.

Opportunities to add permanent art or sculpture to the landscape should be explored.

Much greater attention needs to be given to street cleanliness, weeds in gullies, graffiti and other nuisances.

SECTION C

Attempts should be made to involve members of the local horticultural society in the Bloom initiative

The judges would find it easier to listen to the presentation at the beginning of the tour

Route needs to be slightly better structured and avoid points of marginal importance. Show the judges just the best!

A – 74 B – 27 C – 37 Total 138

COASTAL COMMUNITIES

🏆 **Cleethorpes: Gold Award and Category Winner 178 points**

🏆 **Frank Constable Award for Best Residential Garden – Mr and Mrs Rose, 15 High Thorpe Crescent, Cleethorpes**

○ **Judges Award – Mentoring of new bloom communities in Lincolnshire**

Judged on 11th July Judges Andy Chambers and Doug Stacey

Cleethorpes made a very high quality entry, showing good features across all the judging criteria. We observed immaculately maintained green corridors leading to the town, the Blue Flag beach, well managed conservation areas, stimulating art in the landscape, excellent information, and a litter free flower filled environment. All this, and more, was announcing that those who belong here have a real pride in their place.

However this outstanding Gold Medal presentation cannot be taken for granted. Full support will need to be continued by all involved if these achievements are to be sustained. For example the transition from the planting of seasonal bedding to permanent landscaping has been well managed, but if taken much further could tip the balance in the wrong direction. It should be a priority to engage with all partners involved over any further planned changes, to ensure that the town continues to benefit from its' excellent environment.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The high standard of well maintained planting everywhere. Good examples were the sponsored Sea Road beds, the public gardens along Kingsway, and the further improved Lollipop Express Train Station are but a few.

The well managed transition from seasonal to permanent planting in some locations. An appropriate balance shift has now probably been reached.

SECTION B

Excellent examples of conservation management were appreciated at the Country Park, Sand Dunes and Salt Marsh LNR, Boating Lake reed beds, Bursar Street School adopted Wildlife Garden, and increasing areas of wildflower meadow planting.

Increasing reflection of the town's local heritage in art form. The new memorial Donkey sculpture is one of many examples.

SECTION C

Locals and visitors alike cannot fail to be aware of the town's Bloom campaign. The publicity, media links, tour bus, Lollipop Train, banners, and brilliant signage everywhere is splendid, and impacts beyond the town.

Fundraising and involvement through various projects is also highly commendable. We were particularly impressed by the amazing transformation brought about by the rear Alleyways projects.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The presentation of shrubberies is improving, but scope still exists for the renewal of some rather tired looking sections and the planting of gaps.

Some areas of mulching were noticed. Endeavour to apply consistent mulching to permanent planting around the town.

SECTION B

It was noted that the campaign associated with the changes to household recycling arrangements will hopefully increase the levels achieved.

SECTION C

It was good to see some younger involvement in the management group. In the interests of sustainability continue to encourage such recruitment.

There is much voluntary project involvement. Consider how volunteers could possibly increase their role practically in the high profile sea front areas.

A – 90 B – 44 C – 44 Total 178

COASTAL COMMUNITIES

Skegness: Silver Award 148 points

🏆 EMiB Best Wildflower and Conservation Area – Skegness Eco-Centre

○ Judges Award – The trees, verges and residential gardens around St Matthew’s Church

Judged on 10th July Judges Andy Chambers and Doug Stacey

Skegness has many attractive features. We were particularly impressed by the quality and inspiring management of the large scale conservation areas, and of the many spacious tree lined roads with well maintained residential gardens. These, together with the colourful floral displays on many hotels made valuable contributions to the townscape.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

We appreciated the many eye-catching barrier baskets and tiered planters around the town.

The redesigning of the Compass Gardens to include more permanent planting has added greater interest throughout the year.

SECTION B

We were impressed by the scale, quality and management of the conservation areas e.g. Gibraltar Point and the Eco Centre providing opportunities for education and volunteering.

The inspirational leadership of the CAFA and Eco Centre projects.

The absence of litter at such a major tourist resort in the middle of July.

SECTION C

The restoration of the Best Hotel Competition this year is already increasing the floral impact in the hotel district. It was good to see that high standards of engagement are being achieved with ‘difficult to reach clients’ at the Eco Centre.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Weeds were evident in beds of seasonal planting. Explore whether voluntary assistance could be enlisted to help with this maintenance.

Continue the trend towards more permanent landscaping, using shrubs, hardy perennials, ornamental grasses, and informal groupings of trees, underplanted with bulbs - all designed to complement good quality seasonal plantings. In particular consider this in the open spaces on the seafront as it would better integrate the amusements in the landscape.

SECTION B

Small amounts of graffiti were noticed close by the church.

Removal of weed growth is required in some hard landscaped areas.

SECTION C

Strengthen ‘Bloom focus’ in the overall direction and management of the Bloom project. Consider including an influential ‘Bloom Champion’ to the existing structure or form a specific Bloom Group or sub group.

Provide more evidence in future portfolios of all year round activity and ensure the itinerary includes all aspects of the judging criteria.

A – 71 B – 43 C – 34 Total 148

COASTAL COMMUNITIES

Mablethorpe: Silver Award 141 points

○ Judges Award – Trusthorpe Community Garden

Judged on 17th July Judges Andy Chambers and Doug Stacey

Mablethorpe's Bloom preparations were hampered by many problems, including severe storms covering key features in several feet of sand, vandalism despoiling some areas of natural interest, and changes in committee membership. The positive reaction of the group to this adversity is greatly to their credit. There are several very good aspects of this entry including Trusthorpe Gardens, Linkage Green, Cross Inn landscaping, Queens Park, Blue Flag beach and the colourful planters and hanging baskets.

The final flourish – Pat's floral cake – was almost too good to eat!

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Trusthorpe Gardens, Linkage Green, Cross Inn landscaping, Queens Park, Trefoil Guild bed and the colourful planters and hanging baskets all made commendable contributions to this entry.

SECTION B

The brilliant community pavement weed clearing initiative stimulated by Facebook.

The revamping of the much improved 'Mablethorpe in Bloom' signs, and several examples of self-watering containers, use of water butts and composting.

The recladding by MIB of old black plastic containers with wood to improve appearance.

SECTION C

The introduction of the Street Wardens scheme – a positive response to the recent problems of vandalism. The way the town has reacted to adversity.

The MIB Facebook page and the Town Council's website link to MIB.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Explore with ELDC how the dominant brickwork surrounding the Dunes Gardens beds could be softened, by the replanting of the adjoining borders and the use of trailing plants to overhang the walls. Elsewhere ensure that all flower beds are well presented e.g. properly edged.

There are opportunities for additional informal group plantings of trees e.g. Pines and Holm Oaks in the seafront open spaces. This would better integrate the beach huts and other building developments in the landscape.

Pursue the idea of a seaside garden around the Galleon. Show good examples of residential front gardens, business premises, public buildings etc on future tours.

SECTION B

Consider whether the rather sombre appearance of the beach huts could be brightened up by Restorative Justice teams or similar resources. Complement with more tree and wildflower planting behind. The beach Dome Shelters could be treated with artworks similar to the Trusthorpe utility cabinet.

The street furniture in some areas needs treatment to counteract peeling paint.

Continue the weed clearing initiative and with council support extend to the removal of graffiti.

Show wildlife conservation areas on future tours even if problems persist.

SECTION C

Pursue ideas discussed for widening representation on the MIB committee, providing links with all partners in the community e.g. schools interaction.

Show more evidence of all year round activity e.g. tree and bulb plantings, litter picks etc.

Stimulate community participation by restoring the Bloom competitions e.g. Best Front Garden.

Future judging visits would benefit from an itinerary designed to cover all aspects of the judging criteria.

A – 72 B – 34 C – 35 Total 141

LARGE TOWNS

Belper: Gold Award and Category Winner 180 points

○ **Judges Award – Meadow Court garden**

Judged on 12th July Judges Richard Stephen, Robin Allan and Diane Moore

We received a warm welcome from committee members and Radio Derby waiting to interview the judges before they set off on the tour. The RHS Edible Britain in Bloom theme was taken on board and some interesting planting was seen in the Memorial Gardens, planters and River Gardens. Following last year's success, the 'Bloom' campaign has made sterling efforts to make their entry even better. Another great year for Belper.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The 'Fun Fair' theme of floral bedding displays in Memorial Park and Field Lane were very good and extremely imaginative.

As in previous years the 'Flying Geese' roundabout did not disappoint.

All credit to the 'Friends' - Belper River Gardens permanent planting and bedding displays were a credit to the town. The free and unique Beaurepaire Garden continues to be a delight. Whitemoor Centre regularly helps Peter Davis, the owner, with day to day maintenance.

Increased baskets, tubs and tree plantings across the town

SECTION B

Wyver Lane Nature Reserve is an excellent facility for Belper residents.

Generally street furniture and signage was good as was the street cleaning throughout the town.

Good heritage links, by way of the planting schemes, to Proctors Fun Fair – a regular visitor to Belper.

SECTION C

The continued good relations and support from Radio Derby is a huge asset for Belper's entry.

Encouraging to see the Chapel renovation at Belper Cemetery and the proposed cemetery extension.

Improved evidence of Press coverage of the 'Bloom' campaign and evidence of some new businesses on board.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Consider trying to improve the approach route from St. John's Chapel to the Market Place.

Perhaps show judges more of Belper Cemetery.

In your bedding schemes try to avoid 'clashing colours e.g. Pelargonium Red Dodgem in a bed of red begonias.

Try to include on the tour more contributions by 'public buildings and transport venues'.

Perhaps include a visit to Hunter Road Allotments.

Try to include more residential gardens in the tour

SECTION B

Try to provide some statistical information regarding recycling targets and achievements.

Consider showing another part / view of Wyvern Nature reserve.

More permanent 'Art in the landscape' would enhance the existing Arts Trail.

Provide more information about Milford Meadows and what goes on there.

Try to provide more evidence of volunteer groups and children involved with litter clearances.

SECTION C

Consider showing the efforts made by pupils from a school other than Herbert Strutt Primary.

In the portfolio consider mentioning your future projects.

Consider showing more of the work implemented by volunteer groups such as Milford and Transition Belper.

Engaging more businesses will enhance the Belper campaign, particularly along King St.

On the route the judges didn't meet any children to talk about their efforts.

Try to ensure all the information you want to provide for the judges (press cuttings) is contained within the portfolio.

A – 94 B – 42 C – 44 Total 180

LARGE TOWNS

Market Harborough in Bloom: Gold Award 177 points

○ Judges Award – Welland Park and the Bloom volunteers

Judged on 5th July Judges Richard Stephen, Robin Allan and Diane Moore

Once again the Market Harborough volunteers have taken on the task of leading the 'Bloom' campaign, working hard to gain support from businesses, schools and the general public. Developing the nursery has been a key feature for the volunteers and we are sure it will go from strength to strength. Again, the judges were taken on an excellent tour which involved all elements of the community. Well done Market Harborough

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

An 'Edible' planting theme has been implemented at every opportunity.

Welland Park floral displays have once again excelled, ably supported by Little Bowden Churchyard, Memorial Gardens and the delightfully planted Town Centre full of well planted hanging baskets and planters.

Wonderful to see the Town's Railway Station supporting the Bloom with excellent planters.

The Business Sector have also contributed with their efforts – Three Swans, Doyles, The Red Cow, The Cherry Tree, The Sugar Loaf, Stamps Funeral Directors, Andrew Granger & Co to mention a few.

Throughout the tour we saw a high standard of resident's gardens. Saxon Close Community garden was looking particularly well maintained.

SECTION B

Welland Park's riverside Millennium Trail (with leaflet) continues to impress.

Huge improvements have taken place at the Francis Hammond Arboretum, improved access for the public, good specimen management has been established and areas for wildlife identified.

Local Heritage has been depicted throughout the tour e.g. Union Wharf, Heritage Trail Plaques and several pieces of Art in the landscape.

Once again high standards of cleanliness were observed throughout the tour.

SECTION C

Excellent work by the 'In Bloom' volunteers, uniform sponsored by The Three Swans.

Continuing to work well with business sector across all aspects of the 'Bloom' competition.

Volunteers working with all seven schools but special mention for Meadowdale School and their excellent planters.

Good work by children covering a vacant shop window with drawings promoting the 'Bloom'.

Press and radio coverage for the 'bloom' campaign remains solid

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try to persuade / work with the County Council to regulate the grass cutting programme to coincide with the 'In Bloom' judges visit.

Continue to work with the Fire Station to improve their frontage – planters good, surrounding area not so good.

Consider working with the County Council to try to remove the 'epicormic' growth on the roadside lime trees.

Some of the rose beds in Welland Park need 'beefing' up

SECTION B

Some of the litter bins along the Millennium Walk are in need of attention.

The entrance to the Francis Hammond Arboretum still needs addressing.

Nice allotments but the adjacent Community Garden needs developing and perhaps some assistance from volunteers. Try to work with Council partners to remove any obvious dead / dying trees

SECTION C

Continue to develop sponsorship and business support across the entry.

Consider showing evidence of on-going projects planned for the future either within the portfolio or as part of your introductory presentation.

Some Press coverage regarding litter pick campaigns would benefit the entry.

A – 87 B – 44 C – 44 Total 177

LARGE TOWNS

Spalding: Silver Gilt Award 169 points

🏆 East Midlands in Bloom Award for Best Retail/Commercial Premises –Springfields Retail Outlets and Festival Gardens Complex

○ Judges Award – Tulip Radio

Judged on 9th July Judges Richard Stephen, Diane Moore and Robin Allan

As usual, on our arrival the judges received a warm welcome from members of the 'In Bloom' group. The public gardens of Springfields Retail Shopping Outlet and Festival Gardens is a jewel in Spaldings crown, a wonderful facility to be enjoyed by visitors and residents alike. The historic and quite magical Ayscoughfee Hall and gardens was particularly attractive in the sun. Businesses across the town had done their bit as had the community and the volunteers. Well done Spalding

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Spalding Cemetery was looking well maintained with good mature tree collection.

Ayscoughfee Hall has improved through Dan's enthusiasm to make the grounds as attractive / peaceful as possible.

Some nice gardens for the patients located at the rear of the Johnson Community Hospital.

Excellent displays of floral hanging baskets throughout the town (by South Holland DC), businesses and particularly by the Crescent Independent Traders.

Springfields Retail Shopping Outlet and Festival Gardens (including car park areas) were outstanding again.

SECTION B

Emily Spicer's presentation covering all aspects of the Council's contribution to the 'Bloom' campaign was particularly enlightening.

The recycling projects throughout the town including 'Swishing' and litter picks.

Good work with Bat Boxes. Natural habitat along riverside and in Festival Gardens.

Street cleaning and furniture maintenance has improved.

SECTION C

Re-instating the Garden Competition will we are sure be a success.

Excellent support from Tulip Radio throughout the year.

Good effort from Nene Court residents.

Continued support from local businesses is evident - The Ship Albion Inn, The Birds Pub, The Punch Bowl, The Red Lion and the generous sponsorship of the 14 Charity Shops.

Community groups generally have worked very hard over the last 12 months

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Consider visiting an allotment as part of the judging tour.

Some flowerbeds / shrub beds would benefit from filling up or increasing density of planting.

Grass maintenance needs to be more consistent across the tour.

Consider showing a park or open space other than just Springfields.

Barrier Baskets were good this year but consider increasing the number around the town

SECTION B

The tour would benefit from viewing some actual wildlife conservation projects; consider visiting Vernatts Nature Reserve.

Perhaps some interpretation boards along the riverside, and wildlife / tree information sheets / interpretation boards at the Cemetery would benefit this vast public open space.

Along the judging route; watch out for weeds in some street gutters.

Consider introducing more 'art' into the landscape

SECTION C

Try to increase business participation around the Market Place.

Expand the Garden competition to include Hotels / Pubs.

Portfolio was very informative but could be improved with more photographs of the community groups and volunteers working for the campaign.

A visit to a school or church grounds would make the tour more rounded

A – 87 B – 39 C – 43 Total 169

LARGE TOWNS

Louth: Silver Gilt Award 165 points

○ Judges Award – Richard and Julie Speed and their knit-work

Judged on 9th July Judges Richard Stephen, Diane Moore and Robin Allan

This, their second year of entering the competition shows that Louth have not rested on their laurels following a very successful result last year. By strengthening their Committee, increasing the number of partners and encouraging greater participation from the business sector, this has enabled Louth to significantly improve the entry and to make giant steps towards the coveted Gold award. Well done Louth.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Spout Yard was looking exceptional again.

The Leisure facilities (tennis, bowls) on the way to St. Mary's Church Cemetery were well maintained. Help from Interskill keeps this large mature cemetery as a peaceful, welcoming open space.

Westgate field open space and the 'River of Flowers' project along the Ludd has huge potential.

A mixture of good free standing 'floral' troughs and hanging baskets has improved the look of the town centre.

Good support from businesses such as The Brown Cow (edible theme), Co-op, Cobbles Bar, Kings Head to mention a few.

Charles St. allotments were also a credit to the town

SECTION B

Good to see the expansion of your committee to include a conservation expert.

The 'River of Flowers' theme has potential for being an excellent educational tool as well as a visitor attraction.

Street cleanliness along the route was good

SECTION C

Increased funding from Louth Town Council for the expansion of the basket scheme.

Very good community awareness and general participation.

Excellent work carried out by Margaret Graham, Julie and Richard Speed for their significant 'Yarn Bombing' contribution.

Good contributions from Interskill, Larders Coffee House, Bedzzz of Louth and Spout Yard Trust.

Congratulations on Louth's new 'in bloom' logo and the 'I'm supporting' poster shown in residents windows along the route.

Good 'Press' coverage supporting the 'bloom' campaign. Good Portfolio

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try to increase the opportunities for developing the 'wow' factor in your floral displays.

To develop your entry further, consider entering a couple of the 'special' categories.

The judges will be looking forward to visiting one of the local schools to see their contribution to the 'bloom' campaign next year.

Consider ways of increasing the number of hanging baskets located between St. James's Church and the Market Place. Try to encourage more residents to have 'eye' catching front gardens along the judging route (walking or driving).

SECTION B

Consider showing how children / schools get involved with recycling.

Build on your existing good heritage links.

Continue the good work of keeping the streets clean and gutters free of weeds.

The Art Trail is a good idea; consider developing permanent displays as well as the annual festival. Perhaps make more of the mural on the wall just off the market place?

Continue to develop your street furniture up-grading.

SECTION C

The improvements planned for Enginegate Walk, Kiln Lane and to the rear of the Co-op will make a difference to the town and the judging route.

Continue to strive to increase business participation throughout the town.

Some factual information within the portfolio would help the judges assess your entry (list of sponsors, basket / trough numbers, the number of group litter picks carried out?)

A – 81 B – 42 C – 42 Total 165

LARGE TOWNS

Long Eaton: Silver Gilt Award 164 points

○ Judges Award – Long Eaton Horticultural Society

Judged on 4th July Judges Richard Stephen, Diane Moore and Robin Allan

Another solid all round display which was anchored by excellent roundabout and park floral displays. Long Eaton School continues to support the 'Bloom' campaign. Good presentations by Katie and Edward. The introduction of high quality floral Barrier Baskets, the maturing of the planting scheme at the Library and the long term plans for further improvements confirms Long Eaton's steady progress towards that elusive Gold which is not far away.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Excellent floral displays at The Green Roundabout and adjacent traffic islands.

Brooklands Retirement Home was looking particularly good as were the Town Hall grounds and Carpet Bedding display.

The new Barrier baskets were a great success and enhanced the town's entry considerably.

Rendezvous Café area and the new brick planters sponsored by the 'landowner' have been particularly successful

SECTION B

The quality of street cleanliness is outstanding again.

High standards of recycling continue in Long Eaton, now moved onto a 'Co – mingling' operation.

Street furniture is continuing to improve.

Long Eaton Eco School continues to encourage their pupils to care for the environment – Sensory Garden

SECTION C

Future long term projects look exciting – something for the judges to look forward to.

Very good work done with schools and the 'In Bloom' group.

Good to have the 'free-lance' photographer with the judges as they toured an allotment site.

Good evidence of secured funding for Long Eaton's 'Bloom' campaign

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Points are still being lost due to the absence of business premises support particularly the area along Tamworth Road and the Market Place.

Good to hear that the stone raised planter beds located in West Park are due to be replaced in 2014, something for the judges to look forward to.

Consider trying to include a good range of residential gardens as part of the main tour.

Continue the good work of 'Barrier' planting

SECTION B

It would be good to see some sites (other than Long Eaton School) of natural habitat and wildlife areas.

We understand that more 'Art in the Landscape' is planned; we look forward to seeing them in place.

Long Eaton is a town of historical importance; try to develop stronger links to this element.

SECTION C

More work is required to encourage more of the business sector to get involved and support the town in its efforts to make Long Eaton a special place.

Consider outlining your list of 'partners' (businesses, volunteer groups etc) within the portfolio

A way to encourage greater participation might be to enter a couple of the 'special' categories

A – 83 B – 42 C – 39 Total 164

LARGE TOWNS

Melton Mowbray: Silver Gilt Award 163 points

○ Judges Award – Joyce and Robert at Egerton Lodge Residential Home

Judged on 4th July Judges Richard Stephen, Robin Allan and Diane Moore

Over the last 12 months Melton has not been resting on its laurels having returned to the Bloom last year after a short break. Following the RHS 'Edible' theme was a challenging task which they took in their stride. Good edible displays throughout Melton enhanced the well planned tour. The 'In Bloom' group have worked hard to engage all areas of the community and have combined the various elements to form a very successful campaign. Another delightful entry - well done Melton Mowbray.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The work carried out at St Mary's Church continues to impress.

The Town Centre with the new floral tubs and hanging baskets, Egerton Lodge and the herbaceous borders, the Memorial Gardens overlooking the river are all impressive; the baskets on Burton Road Bridge should in due course be a significant display for the town.

The Country Park (view of the lake and allotments) with the Sensory and Baby Memorial garden maturing nicely. The Heritage Garden is developing well.

Some excellent residential gardens on route contributed to the 'Bloom' entry

SECTION B

The Town Centre and streets along the route were generally clean and tidy.

Some good 'art' in Kings Street (partly hidden by a couple of bicycles).

Hard landscaped areas appeared to be well maintained.

Local heritage is being quite well developed and interpreted.

The Country Park is an excellent natural resource for conservation and wildlife – a credit to the town.

SECTION C

Good work in developing your own 'Bloom' website. Good 'Press' coverage throughout the year and on the day of our visit.

The introductory presentation was very good and informative.

Participation of schools, groups and individuals seems to be on the increase.

Good to see the Kettleby Cross, Anne of Cleeve, Baa Baa's Hairdressers, The Half Moon participating.

Well done Richard Barnes Funeral Directors for their baskets and 'edible' trail contribution.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try to include a longer visit to Wilton Park or New Park.

Try to introduce Interpretation Boards to keep the public / visitors informed of what they see (Country Park, Memorial Gardens, Heritage Gardens, Art in the Landscape etc.)

The Heritage Gardens will improve over time – work in progress.

Continue to try to increase the floral content in the town centre.

We missed viewing Yew Tree Community Garden this year

SECTION B

Some good recycling information was provided in the presentation; it would be helpful to have it in the portfolio.

Where possible try to show the judges some 'Art in the Landscape'.

Perhaps through the portfolio or other locations, try to strengthen the heritage links of the town – Medieval Garden.

SECTION C

Continue to try and get more of the business sector to participate, either through the provision of their own floral tubs / baskets or through your 'In Bloom' group, particularly through the town centre.

Consider visiting a school site to view their planting projects and to show their knowledge and understanding of plants, vegetables and wild flowers

A – 79 B – 41 C – 43 Total 163

LARGE TOWNS

Ilkeston: Silver Gilt Award 162 points

○ Judges Award – Friends of Straws Bridge

Judged on 2nd July Judges Richard Stephen, Robin Allan & Diane Moore

The judges received a warm welcome on a day that was rather grey and overcast. Despite the rather disappointing weather over the last few weeks Ilkeston gave the judges a very interesting and varied tour encompassing quality floral displays, new development projects and evidence of enthusiastic community involvement. It is clear to see that the Borough Council and the community are committed to making Ilkeston a town to be proud of.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The very good new barrier baskets located at White Lions Square and elsewhere in the Borough. The quality of the hanging baskets and the general 'floral' bedding displays were very good.

The Spanish Bar floral display in the rear garden.

The long term 'Regeneration' development plans relating to increased Hanging Baskets, Barrier Baskets and the proposed HLF bid for Victoria Park.

Grass maintenance across the borough was extremely good

SECTION B

Excellent standard of cleanliness throughout the borough.

Recycling facilities / systems and performance targets are a credit to the town.

Good to see Ilkeston's heritage coming to the fore in the form of the 'Stanton' Coal Truck, Victoria Park and Samuel Taylor the 'Giant' (not forgetting the new bench and entrance sign provided by the 'Friends' group).

The Friends of Straws Bridge are growing from strength to strength and have enabled some excellent work towards embracing disabled visitors to the facility

SECTION C

Good to see that there is strong financial support to future development projects across the town.

Excellent work with local schools and 'Friends' groups.

The planned development of Victoria Park with the aid of volunteers and 'Friends' groups can only be good for Ilkeston and it's residents.

Bulls Head, Spanish Bar public houses were looking very good

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Businesses within South St. are still struggling to involve themselves in the Borough's 'In Bloom' campaign.

As part of the tour it would be good to see an 'Allotment' site and perhaps a different school that has gardening projects and works with the Borough on planting projects.

It was felt that the containers / troughs located around the Market Square still lacked density / height and trailing material. Colour scheme seemed to clash with the maroon containers

SECTION B

Disappointed to see 'overzealous' chemical use on grass edges particularly around White Lions Square.

It would be good to see (if possible) another part of Straws Bridge which shows off this excellent facility.

Good to see that the former Tesco site has had a clean-up and it would be a result if you can get this piece of land resolved once and for all

SECTION C

We would encourage you to consider submitting entries to some of the 'special' categories e.g. Best Hotel / Pub and Best Front Garden.

'Press' attendance can be difficult, but you could take your own 'Press' photographs of the 'judging day' to send to the media and place on your website.

Business involvement is difficult to develop but it is important that you persevere with this particular aspect.

A – 81 B – 42 C – 39 Total 162

LARGE TOWNS

Newark: Silver Gilt Award 151 points

○ Judges Award – Friends of Barnby Gate Surgery

Judged on 3rd July Judges Richard Stephen, Diane Moore and Robin Allan

The judges were given a warm welcome at the town's historical 'Sconce' by Members of the Newark in Bloom Committee and the Borough's Deputy Mayor. The interesting and varied route gave the judges an opportunity to see the excellent work done by the various 'Friends' groups, the floral contributions of the Business Sector and good partnership working. Newark has been improving each year and throughout the tour the judges could clearly see that further developments have enhanced the visitor experience to the town

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The well maintained Sconce & Devon Park along with Sherwood Park and Cemetery were particularly good. Good support from the hotel / pub and retail sector with their own well planted hanging baskets and hay troughs eg Pizza Express, John Arderne, White Hart, J.D.Optician, Andy Oliver. Another excellent display from the Grange Hotel Good selection of baskets in the Market Square. St. Leonards Court and the Castle Barge were a joy to see. Overall, a good diversity of projects showing all round horticultural knowledge

SECTION B

Very impressed with Hawton Holt Wildlife area, particularly with the planned future projects. Newark's heritage continues to be a strong element to the town's entry. Holy Trinity School is developing a very good educational /environmentally friendly garden with their school gardening club. – wormery, composting. Newark College's woodland open space and the new educational allotment were very good. Eton Avenue Growers Association have significantly improved their allotments since last year.

SECTION C

Excellent work by the various 'Friends of' groups across the borough. eg Newark Cemetery, Sconce and Devon Park, Eton Avenue Growers Association. and The Wharf etc. Good joint working with the business sector, Town and District Councils. Good evidence of future improvement works which will drive Newark forward.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Grass verges still need improving, try to co-ordinate mowing regime to coincide with the judges visit. It would be a significant development if you could work with Town and District Councils to introduce a Best Front Garden / Best Pub competition. Fitting Newark Castle into the tour again can only enhance the route. Try to develop at least one site / area with 'wow' factor floral display e.g. Castle, Roundabout or a Park

SECTION B

More information relating to recycling in all its guises would improve the entry. Consider trying to introduce some 'art' into the landscape. Litter clearance had greatly improved but more work is required in this area. Wildlife / flora / fauna interpretation boards through Hawton Holt would benefit visitors.

SECTION C

Within the portfolio try to show some of the things you have been doing throughout the year (litter picks /bulb planting involving children and volunteers). It is also good to show some press releases promoting Newark in Bloom. It would have been beneficial to the judges had you taken the opportunity to do a 15 min presentation reviewing the last 12 months and outlining the proposed tour.

A – 76 B – 37 C – 38 Total 151

LARGE TOWNS

Boston: Silver Award 149 points

○ **Judges Award – Pescod Square**

Judged on 8th July Judges Richard Stephen, Robin Allan and Diane Moore

On a cloudy and cool morning, the judges received a warm welcome from Boston's Mayor and members of the Boston 'In Bloom' partnership. Throughout the judging tour it was evident they have continued to successfully develop Boston's entry to the 'Bloom' competition. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting enthusiastic volunteers who obviously take pride in their work and their unique contribution to Boston's floral campaign. New projects planned over the next couple of years will certainly make Boston a force to be reckoned with. Well done Boston.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Increased number of hanging baskets and barrier baskets across the town.

The Memorial Garden in Wide Bargate was very impressive – all credit to Frank Thompson.

Pescod Square retail centre was exceptionally clean with good planting displays throughout.

In a hidden corner Jays garden is a credit to the town and hopefully a long term legacy.

Good support from local businesses Goodbarns Yard, Bizzarro, Pels and the Waterfront Pub to mention a few.

St Botolph's church grounds were well maintained.

Fydell House is being slowly renovated – good progress to date.

Generally, good maintenance of verges and open spaces supported the well rounded tour

SECTION B

Strong links to Boston's heritage through plantings at St Botolph's Church, Guild Hall, Custom House Quay and Fydell House.

Congratulations with your new kerbside collection scheme.

Street cleaning and the street furniture has improved greatly.

Whilst the judges didn't see Witham Way Country Park, the work achieved there can only benefit visitors and residents alike

SECTION C

A very good presentation, outlining the 'bloom' campaign through the aid of video.

A good portfolio has enabled the judges to get a complete picture of Boston's Partnerships and campaign successes.

The renovation and development of Custom House Quay has made a major impact on the town.

Working with partners such as Thistles Nursery, HMP North Sea Camp and in particular Boston Greenscapers has enabled various projects to be completed

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Memorial Gardens could be improved if the 'epicormic' growth was removed from the lime trees.

The new 'period garden' at the 'Stump' will take a while before it begins to make an impact. The planned landscaping improvements to the Market Square should increase the floral impact to that area.

Consider showing the judges allotments or public buildings that are contributing to the campaign.

SECTION B

Whilst street cleaning throughout the tour was generally good, there were areas where weeds were evident in street gutters (e.g. Sussex Avenue).

Memorial Gardens is a credit to the town but the railings particularly under the trees are in need of painting.

Merchants House is missing a floral contribution and quality interpretation board.

Perhaps next year the judges will see the leisure site improvements.

Conservation/ Wildlife areas need to be part of the judge's tour

SECTION C

The proposed development of the Market Square will transform this rather open and bare site.

Boston West School is going through a transformation period, the judges next year will look forward to seeing the improvements that have been implemented.

Throughout the town try to increase the contribution made by the business sector.

Perhaps the 'Press' could take photographs of the judges meeting volunteer groups on site / interview judges.

A – 73 B – 37 C – 39 Total 149

LARGE TOWNS

Gainsborough: Silver Award 122 points

○ Judges Award – Friends of the Old Hall Gardening Group

Judged on 10th July Judges Richard Stephen, Diane Moore and Robin Allan

The 'In Bloom' team have recently gone through a period of change and have now successfully reconstituted themselves, operating via a brand new committee. The new independent group, known as 'Gainsborough in Bloom' has the full support of Gainsborough Town Council, West Lindsey District Council and the Town Centre Partnership. With the new voluntary group formed they can now look forward to seeing sustainable progress over the next 12 months with real achievements that can be appreciated by residents and visitors alike. Well done Gainsborough.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Showfield Allotment is looking particularly good this year with well-maintained plots containing a wide variety of produce.

The 'Tractor' and 'Ping' roundabouts along with Marshalls Yard were significant features on the tour showing a wide range of plant choice and colour.

The Old Hall grounds were very impressive, particularly the labelled Herb borders.

Queen Elizabeth School entrance floral bedding display was also very good.

Excellent work at North Street and Morton Terrace.

SECTION B

The Old Hall and Marshalls Yard provide good evidence of local history within Gainsborough ably supported by the Tractor roundabout.

New street furniture and planters in the Market Place greatly improves the area. The hard landscaping here was also impressive..

SECTION C

Congratulations on developing a 'new' Gainsborough in Bloom organisation with partners from all walks of life, new logo and web-site (Facebook & Twitter)

Refreshing to see your 'aims' outlined in your portfolio.

Good work with Aegir Community School and their contribution in Richmond Park.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Consider including TVA college grounds as part of the tour.

Continue to persevere with the improvements to Ashcroft Road open space.

Richmond Park has huge potential.

Try to improve grass cutting regimes across the town.

Morton Corner had obviously improved, but try to gain control of the corner site as well.

Continue the good work at North Street.

Marshalls Yard has some very good planting but density of planting in some beds needs to be increased significantly.

SECTION B

Continue to develop a theme around Gainsborough's heritage.

Consider showing the judges an area dedicated to promoting and protecting wildlife.

Important to provide (either on site or through the portfolio) information on Gainsborough's recycling schemes and performances.

Street cleaning (mainly kerbside weeds) needs to be improved.

Try to provide more evidence of schools / children participating in litter clear ups.

SECTION C

Try to persuade / encourage West Lindsay District Council's Press / Media section and the Local Press to attend for a photo opportunity somewhere on the judge's tour.

Continue to develop sponsorship opportunities with local businesses.

Try to expand / develop your relationship with schools and volunteering groups.

Encourage Murco Petrol Station to put ground cover plants around the base of your planters.

The town's future plans are impressive for 2014; the judges will look forward to see how they develop.

A – 61 B – 29 C – 32 Total 122

TOWNS

🏆 **Immingham: Gold Award and Category Winner 176 points**

🏆 **EMiB Least Littered Environment Award**

○ **Judges Award – Innovative use of modern media**

Judged on 8th July Judges Dave Bramwell and Sharon Thomas

The In Bloom Group and volunteers are a true inspiration, creating new features at every turn. The landscape has been transformed and it is not surprising that the group have retained their enthusiasm and are now rewarded with the ultimate accolade as category winner

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Lots of new planting brightening up dull areas, the Civic Centre and Museum were particularly good, especially the newly installed 100 and Railway beds

The Allotment initiative will be very successful if this continues as it is

The In Bloom Group is definitely an asset to Immingham and is becoming contagious throughout the Alderney Way Neighbourhood Scheme and adjacent residential areas

The Canon Peter Hall School was good and the grounds were well laid out to support the children in learning about growing and planting

The County Hotel was colourful and welcoming

SECTION B

Excellent interpretation throughout the tour, explaining both the history and biodiversity of the areas shown

Good use of recycled materials and recycled compost to produce home grown plants and nursery stock at the allotment

Innovative use of features and art throughout the town's main areas such as the railway bed, the anchor and the 100

SECTION C

The In Bloom group are very strong on funding and support from volunteers which is reflected in the score.

Engagement with schools and other community groups is very representative of the town's size

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Hopefully the Pilgrim Swimming Club can finish the beds on the right hand side of the Leisure Centre to further enhance the site

Continue the theme to use heritage items from the docklands and railway

Further develop Pilgrim Park

SECTION B

Consider having baseline ecological surveys on the conservation sites to ensure management of these sites is in keeping what is potentially there and to determine what you are trying to achieve

Street furniture such as bins and benches needed repainting; this detracted from the excellent work done on sites such as the Academy and the War Memorial

SECTION C

Consider developing a children/youth community garden/plot at the allotment

Consider the content of the DVD – some of the planting for spring shown were disappointing

The portfolio depicts categories A and C very well; additional information on category B would be helpful

A – 87 B – 42 C – 47 Total 176

TOWNS

Oakham: Gold Award 175 points

○ **Judges Award – Successful fund-raising by the Bloom Group**

Judged on 5th July Judges Dave Bramwell and Sharon Thomas

Oakham always produce a high standard of entry, the quality of the horticultural features is to be admired and combined with the support of the volunteer network and sponsorship the In Bloom group have made a real difference to the community at large

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The Library beds are excellent and towards the Peacock feature the beds are well maintained and appropriate to the area

Cutts Park was well maintained and showed the historical features off well

The Incredible Edible project was inspiring and in general planters were all very good

SECTION B

The landfill statistics are excellent and Rutland should be commended for their efforts to encourage residents who are recycling so much

A really good leaflet and good luck with the Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the Castle area

Fabulous art in the landscape; also new finger posts and interpretation

SECTION C

Good presentation, showing the activities through the year

Comprehensive community participation with excellent financial support both in kind and sponsorship

Good list of achievable projects for the future – keep up the good work

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The verges were not well maintained, it appears that the Local Authority mowing may have been left a little late this season

The Incredible Edible project at the boat bed didn't seem to fit with the ethos – the judges wondered who would be passing on foot to appreciate this

Some isolated areas needed weeding, particularly at the Rutland Radio bed and County Offices

SECTION B

More detail needs to be given in respect of wildlife and conservation work in the area, such as along the main road and woodland area mentioned on the tour

The cleansing was hit and miss; most areas in the town centre were spotless, however pavement detritus was evident in places particularly through the estates and near the museum

Bins and benches needed some attention, some were broken and needed painting

SECTION C

Schools and young people need to be engaged to ensure they are aware of the initiatives in the area; maybe the schools could help with designing a project or a competition for sunflower growing

Consider showing the judges one of the many excellent allotments

A – 91 B – 38 C – 46 Total 175

TOWNS

Bourne: Silver Gilt Award 153 points

○ **Judges Award – creation of a Community Orchard by the Friends of Bourne Wood**

Judged on 10th July Judges Dave Bramwell and Sharon Thomas

The judges received a warm welcome and were presented with an excellent portfolio. One of the highlights of the tour was the visit to the newly developed community orchard and to see the work of the Friends of Bourne Wood. Bourne have performed well again this year in a highly competitive category

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The town centre planters were a welcome splash of colour for visitors and local shoppers

The parks and open spaces managed by United Charities were excellent

The allotments were very well managed, plots were productive and well tended

SECTION B

Conservation areas at the Jubilee Meadows, Bourne Wood and Elsea Meadows were excellent, hidden gems within Bourne, local residents must be proud of these valuable assets

Recycling and composting is a strong element at Bourne, keep up the good work

Local heritage is excellent, with good leaflets and interpretation on sites

The Community Orchard and the work of the volunteers to develop this area is to be commended

SECTION C

The whole community are involved in Bourne in Bloom at some point, lots of up and coming projects particularly at the new housing development

Funding and support in kind is strong in this entry, lots of people are giving time or materials/products at cost, all going towards a sustainable bloom campaign

Year round activities keep the social side of this campaign fresh and all ages are involved

Areas suggested for development

SECTION A

Continue to develop the parks and open spaces

Further encourage local businesses to be creative in their floral contribution to the town centre

Consider developing the area around the Library and Red Hall

SECTION B

Some street furniture still needed attention, such as notice boards and the railings outside the Derby and Joan Hall Graffiti is a problem and needs to be tackled by enforcement and removal, areas such as the alleyway near Boots

Consider having baseline ecological surveys on the conservation sites to ensure management of these sites is in keeping what is potentially there and determine what you are trying to achieve

“Welcome to the Elsea Meadow” would highlight this site to local residents and this may support a larger volunteer base

SECTION C

This is a strong area for Bourne, the portfolio is excellent and supports the tour, however the 15 minute presentation should be used to give the judges extra information on new/proposed projects

Volunteers being brought in to the meadow areas similar to that at the Wood may be considered

A – 76 B – 35 C – 42 Total 153

TOWNS

Southwell: Silver Award 145 points

○ Judges Award – The work at the Flower Pod

Judged on 10th July Judges Dave Bramwell & Sharon Thomas

This is a new entry in to the Bloom competition and what a start! The tour had some great elements to it, with a real highlight being the visit to Potwell Dyke wildflower grasslands. The judges felt that this was a strong contender and one to watch out for the future

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The landscaping at the church was a welcoming splash of colour at the main entrance

The quality of the residential gardening throughout Southwell was very good; residents take a great pride in the appearance of their town and make sure that gardens are all up to scratch

The shops in the town centre had made a real effort to dress their windows to ensure full advantage was made to impress passers by

SECTION B

The Flower Pods development has minimal impact on the environment – straw built building and reused materials to create this excellent project, one to be followed

The Potwell Dyke wildflower grassland is one of the best the judges have seen, a truly honest endeavour

The heritage aspects of Southwell are strong and have obvious links to the community

SECTION C

The continuity and development of the volunteering community in Southwell is very strong and the In Bloom initiative will no doubt develop over the coming years

The community volunteering numbers involved in Southwell are outstanding – well done

The Flower Pod is a wonderful initiative which will no doubt be a very successful enterprise for the future and in the coming years will be a pleasure for the judges to visit and to see grow

Areas for Development

SECTION A

The quality of planters needed to be a little better to create the impact expected at this time of year

Try to include the parks into the tour, to ensure that full marks can be achieved in this area

A very good first time entrant

SECTION B

Graffiti is a problem at Southwell, consider tackling this through the Local Authority, a targeted approach needs to be taken. Consider using Community Payback or a similar scheme as used elsewhere.

Liaise with the Local Authority on coordinating street-sweeping to ensure detritus is tackled in gutters

Some benches and bins need repainting to lift these often forgotten facilities

The group may wish to consider enhancing the War Memorial as it is such an important heritage feature and see if funding is available potentially via the Royal British Legion to commemorate the 100 years since World War One

SECTION C

To help with the In Bloom concept consider using branding – such as a logo doubled up from the Gardening Club, consider T-Shirts to improve identity when out and about doing community gardening

Publicity material and press coverage will build as soon as the branding initiative has been developed – ensure press cuttings are kept for future evidence for the Bloom judges

Consider using your time more selectively to ensure that you show the Judges the crème de la crème of what you are doing, so that you can fit all the other items into the portfolio and presentation

A – 72 B – 37 C – 36 Total 145

TOWNS

System: Silver Award 125 points

○ **Judges Award – Merton Primary School Gardening Club**

Judged on 9th July Judges Dave Bramwell and Sharon Thomas

The judges were made welcome by the In Bloom group. The extensive watering system and hanging basket displays were to be commended. The floral displays were heritage themed and made you stop and think about the history of the town – an innovative idea, well done

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The Queen Victoria Public House has made a significant contribution to this entry

The businesses throughout the town centre are an asset to the overall floral displays

The quad at the Heath Centre was well designed and tranquil

The parks were well maintained, the grass in particular was excellent for this time of year

SECTION B

The recycling ethos of the town was very good with a high percentage being recycled and a good use of composted material

The efforts made by the group in respect of heritage was well received by the judges, it would be nice to see these as more permanent features for the future

The self-watering system was very good and ensured that the hanging baskets were looking healthy

SECTION C

Funding and In Kind support is strong in this group – keep up the good work

Liaison with other groups is becoming evident and this should be extended

Easily identifiable logo and branding of the group is very good including T-Shirts and stickers in local shop windows

Good list of on-going project of tree planting and landscaping

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The floral bedding could have been fuller and the choice of some plants didn't blend well together in some areas, such as the round tiered planters and the cemetery

Some dead plants such as roses at the cemetery were evident

Some of the bedding particularly the planters required weeding

SECTION B

The visit to Watermead Country Park could have benefited from additional information either printed off the website or research notes for the judges on the day

The street scene could have benefited from closer liaison with Local Authority

The street furniture needed improvement from painting or repair

SECTION C

Coordination of the route could be improved, ensure you check the judging criteria and give a balanced and representative tour to ensure maximum marks

Practice the route to ensure that you know where you are going next

A calendar of events and a list of sponsors/partners would be helpful to the judges

A – 67 B – 27 C – 31 Total 125

TOWNS

Staveley: Silver Award 121 points

○ Judges Award – Fund-raising to enhance and preserve the Town’s Heritage

Judged on 18th July Judges Dave Bramwell and Sharon Thomas

The judges received a warm welcome at the Roundhouse and on the guided tour that followed. The relationship with partners was evident and the funding received was to be admired. Staveley has created an opportunity to put the town back on the map and the judges look forward to seeing all the projects develop in the future

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The hanging baskets were a real asset to the town centre

There were well maintained allotments with a good up take of plots

Ringwood Hall was well maintained and should be commended on their continued refurbishment policy

SECTION B

The innovative use of the spring water at the allotments and the installation of the composting toilet

Local heritage is a strong feature of this entry and is being developed robustly for the future

Recycling the grey water at the Roundhouse is excellent and is used to flush the toilets and water hanging baskets

The judges are looking forward to seeing the Heart of Staveley project

SECTION C

Community participation is the strongest aspect of this entry – volunteers are doing an excellent job all over Staveley
Funding being generated to achieve Staveley’s project ambitions has generated millions of pounds for the area and should be commended

Collaboration and partnership working is strong and works well

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The Local Authority need to ensure that the beds are planted up and maintained, such as the church and the town centre

The quality of the weeding at focal points needs to be addressed, such as the Canal Hub

Time could have been saved by not visiting the private garden – the garden was stunning however not accessible to the public

The judges are looking forward to seeing the roundabout bed being developed from the children’s designs

SECTION B

Ideally the judges would like to see further evidence of the conservation and biodiversity work being done

The judges were not clear about who was planting trees and there was no information on ownership and long term management of the tree planted areas

Further collaboration is required with the Local Authority in respect of street cleansing – there was evidence of limited street sweeping and litter removal

In some areas street furniture needed attention and again the Local Authority need to be supportive

SECTION C

All the good work in Staveley needs to be linked to the In Bloom campaign – consider branding

There was no evidence of press or publicity in respect of East Midlands in Bloom

Year round Bloom activity was not evident in the presentation – a calendar of events would be beneficial

Please look at the criteria to ensure you show the judges all you have to gain maximum points

A – 56 B – 31 C – 34 Total 121

TOWNS

Burbage: Bronze Award 118 points

○ **Judges Award – Outdoor facilities at the Infant School**

Judged on 9th July Judges Dave Bramwell and Sharon Thomas

The judges enjoyed the walk around this Town and a real highlight was a visit to the local school to see all the outdoor facilities for the students. The town has an excellent heritage trail and has a wide range of business involvement, encouraging bigger and better displays in the tranquil town centre. The judges are looking forward to seeing how this Town progresses as there is lots of potential for this entry

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The work at the local school was excellent – the children had a lovely outside area to help them explore and develop their imagination

The group had brightened up dull areas such as the church entrance

The hanging baskets were colourful and brightened up the business frontages along with the hanging basket trees and planters that the group had provided

The residential gardens were very good, there appears to be a wealth of horticultural knowledge in the town

SECTION B

The Horsepool is an excellent area for conservation and education location in the centre of town

The town has an excellent heritage trail with good interpretation throughout the area

The town was generally litter free, well maintained and respected

SECTION C

This area is the weakest aspect for the group, mentoring and outside help may be an advantage if the group wish to continue to improve

The Parish Council's support in respect of the floral displays go a long way to ensure Burbage looks nice for visitors and residents

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Some areas had dead plants – such as the War Memorial and the Horsepool area and should be removed

Liaise with the Local Authority to look at timings of the route preparation, particularly with regard to grass cutting

SECTION B

Wildlife and conservation areas could be presented better, including ecology surveys and the installation of bird/bat boxes by local residents

The judges would have benefited from recycling figures and composting information during the tour

SECTION C

An idea could be for the Parish Council to do a public consultation and workshops to develop a Parish/Town plan.

This would help engage the public and set out clear objectives for future improvements, this could also generate new interest/members

Engagement with other established groups would be of benefit, knowledge and experience could be shared

A – 76 B – 27 C – 15 Total 118

SMALL TOWNS

🏆 Long Sutton: Silver Gilt Award and Joint Category Winner 167 points

○ Judges Award – Annie’s Patch

Judged on 4th July Judges John Simpson and Jeff Bates

Long Sutton in Bloom has been Blooming for twenty two years and still goes from strength to strength. The 25 enthusiastic volunteers are a shining example of what can be achieved when a community unites behind a cause. The tireless work and effort of the group is evident throughout the town, from the magnificent “Annie’s Patch” to the 120 plus hanging baskets adorning shop fronts, public buildings, and schools.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The judges were impressed with the planting at the Gedney Triangle. Much thought had gone into the planting of this dry and exposed site. The selection of plants was appropriate and colourful.

Businesses continue to support your efforts despite these difficult times

Cowper’s Gate continues to delight the judges, along with Annie’s Patch.

The work of the children at “Long Sutton Primary” along with the support of Tony and Sarah is excellent. The judges were shown around the grounds by Millie and Isla who are both destined for careers in public speaking. They were rightly proud of the work that they and the rest of the “Eco Warriors” were involved in.

SECTION B

There was a virtual absence of any litter, fly posting or graffiti. The painting on the boarded up windows of the derelict building on the high street is a good way of managing a possible eyesore.

Your management of resources has been well thought out. Composting old plants, recycling compost bags to reduce the amount of compost required for your tubs, and the rainwater harvesting are all good ideas.

The new bus shelter on the high street looks modern yet fits nicely with the surrounds.

SECTION C

The use of a “Shop Window” in the town to promote the work of the Bloom group is a fantastic idea.

The wide number of groups supporting the bloom campaign is to be admired. Residents, schools, guides and scouts are all involved in this tremendous effort

The portfolio is well laid out following the judging criteria and highlights year round involvement.

The impressive levels of fund raising are positive examples of the commitment of the bloom team.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Several areas were weedy, notably the car park adjacent the “British Legion” and “Villa Close” Continue to liaise with the local authority over the management of these areas

The “Pop Bottle” gardens bed requires attention. Much of the planting is starting to come to the end of its natural life. You need to consider whether to redesign the area or to undertake some selective removal along with a programme of hard pruning and replacement planting.

Attention is required to beds in the Co-Op car park. There were weeds, self-sets, and bare areas in many of the beds. Try to work in partnership with the store to enhance these areas to the same high standard as achieved outside the main entrance.

SECTION B

Continue to explore the possibility of the “Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust” allowing more public access to the “Shrubberies”; this area of woodland, natural grassland and wildflower meadow is a hidden gem.

SECTION C

Look to update the video presentation. Many of the photos are of old projects. Look to include some of the new projects that you are working on.

Include some statistics on the number of hours involved on bloom related projects. This could also be quantified into a value for work in kind. This would be useful when talking to local authorities. You can highlight the value of the work you are undertaking, and the effort involved

A – 84 B – 40 C – 43 Total 167

SMALL TOWNS

🏆 Uppingham: Silver Gilt Award and Joint Category Winner 167 points

🏆 EMiB Best Pub / Hotel garden – the Falcon Hotel

○ Judges Award – Todd's Piece New Landscape

Judged on 8th July Judges John Simpson, Jeff Bates and Jo Hull

Glorious weather was unnecessary to help show the many attractions of the lovely Rutland town, where the efforts of the Uppingham in Bloom team, ably led by Karen Emery, and on the tour assisted by Rob Fisher in particular, are seen throughout the judging route. Seasonal colour complements the lovely treescape provided by the Arboretum, Todds Piece and other open spaces. We were also very pleased to note that the whole team of volunteers were invited for a buffet lunch to finish our tour.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

There were many admirable aspects to this full tour of the town. Particular mention must go to the bright and cheerful containers and planting schemes in prominent areas (Market Place, Baines Corner and Dairy Corner in particular); the outstanding garden at the Falcon Hotel; the splendid and successful use of Edibles in prominent places (again, Dairy Corner in particular); the lovely, peaceful garden at the aptly-named Garden Hotel. The grounds of Uppingham School are a delight, with the Arboretum, the borders on High Street West and the new grounds at the community Sports Centre particular strengths. The new garden on Todd's Piece is unusual and most interesting, and we look forward to seeing how it develops (given that it is only just completed and not yet open).

SECTION B

An exceptionally clean and tidy town! No litter, dog-fouling (well done on the success of your campaign) or fly-posting to be seen anywhere. Art in the landscape is prominently displayed, with the new 'Rutland' garden, designed and implemented by a local firm (very well represented on our visit by Craig Piggot) the undoubted highlight. Heritage is evident throughout, especially in the impact of the historic school everywhere in the town. The planned new community orchard and the Heritage Trail – with interpretation panels due to be installed later in year – are excellent initiatives. We also applaud the proposed Nature Area on London Road, and hope that this can be progressed successfully.

SECTION C

Very great praise for your efforts in this section; this is a community led Bloom effort in every sense, and the outstanding support that you get from Uppingham School (in terms of time, commitment and expertise) to support your own community-based work is wonderful to behold. We enjoyed our visit to Leighfield School (where Lily, Kieran and Tabby did a fine job of the showing us around). You have engaged well with most of the business community of the town, and have outstanding levels of bloom-based fundraising, with cheese-and-wine, the Ball and other successful events raising essential resources. We are impressed that the UiB team has grown and moved forward, but continued to successfully engage with the past stalwarts of the team at the same time. You have hugely raised your profile, with good evidence of press support and regular work with Radio Rutland (with them represented for interviews as part of the tour). Well done!

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

At a very prominent spot (Dairy Corner) it was most unfortunate that the containers on Moores wall were all wilting; try to walk the tour earlier in the day to check these sorts of things if at all possible. The Leicester Road Allotments are good, and the initiative to 'do' a UiB plot is brilliant, but at the moment it is very much at a formative stage, and would perhaps have benefitted from a description rather than a visit. Rob Fisher is aware of the condition of the poplars at the edge of the 'Sports Centre' site; we hope that appropriate remedial work (or removal) will take place.

SECTION B

There was little to show in terms of active work for conservation and biodiversity; the work at Leighfield School would have usefully been visited on the tour.

We were impressed with the amount of composting going on (through the efforts of Uppingham School in particular), and by the highly efficient new Sports Centre; we would, however, encourage you to try to minimise peat and water usage in the many containers in the town.

The hard landscaping is of high quality, as is the public horticulture, but the condition of much of the prominent street furniture is poor, with litter bins damaged, seats desperate for a rub-down and re-paint and finger- and lamp-posts in need of a re-paint too, all of which detracts from the horticulture.

You also have evident graffiti in places; on service boxes, PO 'drop-boxes' and on the fence in Todd's Piece. We would encourage you to have a campaign and focus on these issues with the success that you have had in reducing dog-fouling.

SECTION C

Little to do here other than continue with the work. You may wish to structure the visit to the school a little better and perhaps also to directly engage with representatives from the Wildlife Trust or the Heritage Group as part of the tour – but this is a notable improvement in the section and a great strength of your entry.

A – 84 B – 39 C – 44 Total 167

SMALL TOWNS

Bakewell: Silver Gilt Award 165 points

○ **Judges Award – Grafika Garden**

Judged on 3rd July Judges John Simpson and Jeff Bates

The on-going efforts of the dedicated bloom team make this busy market town a pleasure to visit. Throughout the tour, the judges were shown numerous examples of where bloom is making a real difference to the appearance of the town. The tour was enhanced by the knowledge of George Challenger one of the tour guides who was able to give unlimited amounts of information about the heritage of Bakewell. Some of the highlights included the now familiar Bath Gardens, the subsidised Hanging Baskets throughout the town, and the Riverside Gardens.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

There were many highlights on the tour.

Bath Gardens were again splendid as were the Well Dressings, the numerous baskets adorning the shop fronts, and the pretty courtyards.

The frontage of the Alms Houses, the Riverside Gardens and the large number of well-maintained gardens were all worthy of mention. The grounds of T.C Harrison and local business "Grafika" were exceptional.

The Monyash Road Allotments and the view of Scotts Garden were also pleasant. The chat with the owner of the "Peacock Pub" who is involved with the colourful displays that adorn his premises was also appreciated.

SECTION B

The Judges were mightily impressed with the virtual absence of any litter, graffiti, or dog fouling. For such a busy town this was remarkable. The street furniture and seating around the town was in a good clean state.

The interpretation panels highlighting the issues surrounding people feeding the ducks was excellent. Many people would not realise the impact their actions are having on this natural area.

SECTION C

The high levels of support from a wide range of organisations and individuals are to be applauded. The efforts to raise funding through numerous events and sponsorship is impressive.

The use of Radio and press, along with a dedicated web pages to highlight the bloom campaign are all tremendous. A splendid effort by the team.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try to include a school on the tour. This shows how the younger people of the community are involved. The portfolio talks about the work at the schools, but it would be nice to talk to the children themselves.

Try to encourage Rajas Restaurant to tidy the back of their premises that adjoin the Riverside Gardens. The area is being let down by the drab appearance of this business. The judges support the idea of forming a friends group at the Riverside Gardens.

The town will also benefit from the proposed landscape works outside the Co-Op. This will transform a largely un-noticed area with the introduction of seating and new planters

SECTION B

More could be done with regards to conservation and bio-diversity. The judges had previously been taken to the wildflower meadow in the churchyard. This was sadly missed from this year's tour. Consider the judging criteria carefully to allow time to show a wide range of examples.

George Challenger was able to share a wealth of information about the heritage of the town yet very little was evident for the visitor to digest.

SECTION C

Try to make more reference to year round projects. As previously stated the inclusion of a school would highlight the work and understanding of the younger people of Bakewell.

Consider getting someone from the Local Authority, or the Environment agency to meet the judges to discuss the work to re-establish the eroded river banks.

A – 83 B – 42 C – 40 Total 165

SMALL TOWNS

Darley Dale: Silver Gilt Award 157 points

🏆 **Barcham Trees Best New Permanent Landscape Award - St Elphin's Park**

🏆 **Taylor's Bulbs East Midlands in Bloom Award for Most Improved Entrant**

○ **Judges Award – The Garden at Peak Rail Station**

Judged on 3rd July Judges John Simpson and Jeff Bates

Darley Dale is a second year entry into the competition and is making giant strides under the enthusiastic bloom group. The tour highlighted the strong community participation and pride that residents of Darley Dale have. The group had taken last year's judges' comments, and acted upon every single suggestion. The enthusiasm of the group is infectious, and is starting to galvanise the community into a real sense of pride.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The excellent restoration of the grounds at the Train Station, under the guidance of June and David, along with support from DHL.

The Oddford lane allotments managed by the Town Council were the best seen on this year's judging tour.

St Elphins retirement village has a real wow factor.

The judges also noted the work at the "Avenues" and the enthusiasm of the people at "Flower in the Field" as being superb.

Whitwell Park was also well managed and a perfect end to a well-planned tour.

SECTION B

The Town was remarkably clean and tidy. There was no dog fouling, or graffiti to be seen, and the litter picks organised by the group are having a positive impact.

The positive efforts to highlight heritage at Whitwell Park are well worthwhile. The heritage at the Train Station is well documented and a joy to visit.

The partnership work with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to manage the "Willow Way Wood" is excellent.

Recycling was evident in the restoration of the Train Station grounds, and the project at the "Avenues" where residents had lifted and split plants from their own gardens to brighten neglected corner plots.

SECTION C

A superb effort to encourage and engage with the community. The high levels of publicity through the local "Update" magazine, through to greater use of public notice boards and the superb "Web Page" are all to be applauded.

Community participation at the "Avenues" is infectious and making a difference along with instilling a real sense of community spirit.

The portfolio highlighted year round involvement through a large number of organised events. The efforts to engage with the residents prior to the commencement of work at the "Avenues" were excellent.

An excellent effort, keep up the good work.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Continue to monitor the judging route. The judges were taken to two allotments. The "Oddford Lane" site was of such quality that anything after that was going to be a let-down. It also eats into your judging time.

Monitor the development works at the primary school and encourage them to be part of the effort in the coming years. This will also strengthen your entry given the age of the children.

SECTION B

Highlight Resource Management more effectively in your portfolio. There is very little reference. Continue to monitor gap sites within the town (former garden centre)

Continue to encourage the business community to participate in the campaign. The pub at the end of the town on the way to bakewell looks abandoned at first glance. With its prominent road side position on the entrance into the town, it would benefit from some strategically placed planters.

Continue to monitor possible opportunities to create "Wildflower" areas.

SECTION C

Continue to gather evidence of year round projects through photos etc. Continue to encourage participation, from volunteers and the business community. Consider encouraging a representative from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to meet the judges and discuss the partnership work at "Willow Way Wood"

A – 80 B – 36 C – 41 Total 157

SMALL TOWNS

Crowland: Silver Gilt Award 151 points

 **EMiB Committee Award – Crowland in Bloom**

○ **Judges Award – Bee Friendly and Edible Gardens at the Library**

Judged on 9th July Judges John Simpson, Jeff Bates and Jo Hull

A real team approach from the Crowland in Bloom team has made huge strides to develop the appearance and environment of this Fenland town. The iconic Abbey now sits in a clean, attractive and colourful setting due to their unstinting effort. Many more people are now involved and links have been established with local businesses, providing valuable support in kind, and all this augurs well for the future. A splendid effort!

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

There are many improvements in this section, but particular mention must be made to the Bee Friendly Garden and herb / edible beds on the former waste ground at the library car park. This is a splendid effort, and looked most colourful on the day of our visit.

We were impressed with the improved, sustainable container planting schemes; no less colourful for the change of plant materials used. The planter on the mosaic is a superb example of what can be achieved with the green wall approach.

The Millennium Garden continues to be beautifully maintained and attractive, and all through community effort.

Good allotments were seen, and also the green and attractive space of Snowden Field.

Abbey 345 pre-school is a delight, with the 'wild' garden area supplemented by the tiny but productive kitchen garden; all is well cared for, very well used by the children and a tremendous introduction for them to the need to care for their environment.

SECTION B

The Wildlife pond, converted from an old lido, is a great feature of the town, forming part of an important wildlife corridor out to the Welland. It was good to see Phil and Dave out there working on the site and to hear of the work that they do with the schools to introduce them to the nature on their doorsteps.

You are completely peat-free in your containers, with the link to the Bettaland / Organic Recycling very important in this regard.

The town is free of all but minor and recent littering, and no other adverse aspects (dog-fouling, graffiti, fly-posting etc) were to be seen. All the street furniture and signage is in good condition and it is good to see the improved appearance of the sculpture and mosaic by the library due to the Bloom team efforts.

SECTION C

Lots going on in community at Crowland in Bloom – outstanding examples are the work to re-decorate the bus shelter, clean the mosaic etc. It is also clear that you are now a stronger group who are better publicising your work, and we admire the coordination across the South Holland Bloom community that you are fully part of.

The development of in-kind support with local businesses is good – the visit to the Garden Centre showing one such example.

You have produced the most innovative and amusing 'bloom tour sheet' that we have ever seen! You have battled past objections to achieve great things – well done.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Some of the older aspects of the floral areas are ready for a re-think now – as you are aware; this particularly applies to some of the basket trees, which are not necessarily appropriately sited (or indeed appropriate at all) in your lovely rural setting.

There has been good new tree planting at the edge of Snowden Field, but some urgent requirement for watering must be considered whenever new planting takes place.

SECTION B

Whilst this is now a very good section we feel that you could make much more of the heritage of the town, both in the portfolio and on the tour. Links between the fenland landscape and the town, and especially the links between Bloom activities and the Abbey and Trinity Bridge, could both be further developed – we did not see for ourselves the Abbey gardens at all, for example.

SECTION C

You can go further with the work of raising your profile, gaining more supporters etc, and should retain this as a focus for the coming year. Ensuring that your core supporters are recognised is important, but we do feel that little was gained by actually visiting the garden centre – it would be better to use the limited ‘tour time’ on site.

A – 77 B – 38 C – 36 Total 151

SMALL TOWNS

Messingham: Silver Gilt Award 151 points

○ Judges Award – Messingham Sand Quarry Nature Reserve

Judged on 2nd July Judges John Simpson, Jeff Bates and Jo Hull

Messingham is a desirable small town with bursts of colour accentuating its neat and tidy appearance. Having been part of Yorkshire in Bloom in previous years, the East Midlands are delighted to welcome this well maintained, attractive town into its In Bloom portfolio. Sue & John England conducted the tour, including a visit to the Messingham Sand Quarry. This outstanding Site of Specific Scientific Interest contrasts nicely with the carefully tended gardens of the town. The public flower beds maintained by the residents really highlight the sense of community pride evident in the town.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The good quality planting of hanging baskets, planters, window boxes and beds is consistent throughout the town and a credit to the volunteers, particularly the impact made outside the library and Co-op. The rose bed outside La Gondola enhances the restaurant and making it a welcoming place.

The large numbers of beautifully maintained residential front gardens, to a high standard, are a credit to the residents. A special mention is given to Stuart Buckley for his work on the island bed on Knightsbridge Road and to Shirley and Barry Staff for their tireless efforts in maintaining the bus shelter planting.

One cannot fail to notice the big impact the simple block colour planting has on showcasing the war memorial.

SECTION B

The excellent Sand Quarry is very well maintained including outstanding wildflower meadows, well managed woodland areas and a haven of wildlife habitats.

Messingham is exceptionally clean and tidy, free from litter, graffiti & dog fouling. A strong sense of place and pride is reflected in the information and notice boards in the Co-op and library areas.

SECTION C

The commitment and enthusiasm from the community to In Bloom is evident throughout Messingham and is highly commendable. Strong relationships are being forged with the playgroup; this is a great to introduce the campaign to the children and encourage their participation in future years.

The success of securing funding from the Co-op and the Parish Council is a great achievement for the Committee and it is encouraging to see such support from a large business.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Consider balancing the use of bedding plants with more sustainable permanent planting. This will also help create focal points throughout the year. More use of spring bulbs along roadside verges would enhance the visual journey through the town.

We caught a glimpse of an impressive bowling green, shrub bed and sculpture when passing through the memorial playing field – we'd like to see more of this!

Whilst we recognise that the grass cutting and maintenance of public areas lies with North Lincolnshire Homes and North Lincolnshire District Council, they do bring down the overall impact of the area. It is worth continuing to build on these relationships.

SECTION B

Consider inviting a representative from the Wildlife Trust to briefly talk about the management and key features of the Sand Quarry and provide examples of any information leaflets.

Investigate further opportunities to promote recycling of rubbish and green waste, for example by sprucing up the recycling area.

We would like to see more made of the W.I. village sign.

SECTION C

Consider structuring the judging route more carefully to avoid back-tracking and very short car journeys. Walking will often suffice. Think carefully about how each site fits with the judging criteria.

Try to evidence and document work and progress throughout the year. Production of a Messingham in Bloom portfolio, for example containing press articles, newsletter and photos of projects throughout the year would showcase the volunteers' seasonal achievements.

Presentation could be more forthcoming – the Bloom campaign is considerably better than you told us! E.g. the forthcoming Caterpillar Trail, Horse Show, Show Ground events etc. Try to capture this during the 15 min presentation time allowance.

A – 74 B – 38 C – 39 Total 151

SMALL TOWNS

Blidworth: Silver Award 131 points

○ **Judges Award – The Memorial Garden**

Judged on 2nd July Judges John Simpson, Jeff Bates and Jo Hull

A warm welcome from Chris, Bill and Martin (the Blidworth in Bloom Committee) and a jolly scarecrow, greeted the Judges at the Miners Welfare. The highlights of our tour took in the excellent, brightly planted hanging baskets and planters throughout the town (they really do lift the spirits); the thoughtfully designed and beautifully maintained Memorial Garden, the well-dressing and Cradle Rocking sculpture really celebrate the community's pride and enthusiasm. The school can boast outstanding horticultural achievements, particularly with their wildlife garden and allotment – something the children are clearly passionate about. We completed the tour at the delightful Fox and Hounds pub, the colourful planting the perfect backdrop for the greatly appreciated refreshments served.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The creativity and effort that has gone into the exceptional school gardens and allotment are a huge credit to everyone involved.

We were pleased to see the enthusiasm and vision for improving the front of the Miners Welfare and look forward to seeing the new wildflower meadow. This community commitment is strongly evident in the beautifully kept Memorial Garden, at Forest Folk Corner, the excellent planters, troughs and hanging baskets and the colourful patio areas at The Fox & Hounds.

The Dale Lane Allotments are well-tended with excellent examples of good horticultural practice.

SECTION B

High commendation for the school is given for the creation of the wildflower meadow and other planting to encourage wildlife and biodiversity.

The bee hive and floral planting near the Memorial Garden and church is delightful.

The signage and interpretation of Blidworth's cultural heritage is excellent, particularly the cradle rocking sculpture. A very strong pride of place is evident through the school murals created with the local artist, the Leisure Centre planting, the well dressing, and the fruit and veg display outside Sherwood View. We look forward to seeing how plans for the windmill restoration develop.

SECTION C

Clearly, there is a strong core group of 3 committee members, led by Christine, who work well together as a team and are supported by a variety of other volunteers including the Beavers, Scouts, Army Cadets and community church volunteers.

The tour was generally well planned and thought out, highlighting the work and effort gone into projects, such as the edible beds and church garden. The excellent links with the school should ensure the continuity of volunteers for Blidworth in Bloom in the future.

The hand-crafted poppies by the Cornwater Club ladies and the joinery skills of the Men in Sheds beehive are a lovely way to enhance the In Bloom campaign. The scarecrows are a great, fun theme to have throughout the town.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Consider including more public green space in the tour; previously, there has been a visit to the bowling green.

Consider including residential areas, such as well-kept front gardens or window boxes, to showcase individual pride in where people live.

Beware of 'municipal shrub pruning' by the local authority – would like to see more natural plant forms near Forest Folk Corner.

SECTION B

Consider balancing the use of bedding plants with more sustainable permanent planting. This will also help create focal points throughout the year.

Consider including an area for wildlife conservation other than at the school – the new wildflower planting will contribute to this and it would be nice to see this theme continued elsewhere in the town.

SECTION C

The beautifully hand-written portfolio is well presented. Inclusion of a diary of events and press cuttings/literature celebrating projects throughout the year would be beneficial in raising the profile of Blidworth in Bloom.

Consider liaising with Newark & Sherwood District Council to grub out and sweep the route prior to judging. For example, the excellent work done on the library forecourt is let down by the surrounding council maintained area.

A – 62 B – 33 C – 36 Total 131

SMALL TOWNS

Holbeach: Silver Award 130 points

○ Judges Award – The Holbeach Action Group

Judged on 4th July Judges John Simpson and Jeff Bates

Holbeach are moving forward with a new drive and purpose. The new bloom team are making progress in the right direction, and their efforts can be seen to good effect throughout the town, along with the support of the Holbeach Action Group. The large number of floral baskets adorning business premises and the well managed All Saints Church were of particular note. The two weeks spent by the group painting every fence, lamp post, and seat made a noticeable difference to the town. A real community effort!

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The quality of the hanging baskets were some of the best seen on this year's tour.

The maintenance of the grounds at the All Saints Church and Stukeley gardens was very good. The work carried out by Tony Walker, and Mr Foyster was of a very high standard

There were a number of well managed residential gardens seen during the tour.

Section B

The "Bushel of Wheat" sculptured from a tree trunk on the Foxes Low Road was an excellent idea, and very eye catching.

The painting of railings around Market Hill along with colourful barrier baskets and heritage panels was excellent.

Holbeach Nature Reserve was well kept and included a recently donated Dovecote and Bird Box. The work of John and Nancy to help maintain this area is to be applauded

Section C

The hard work and dedication of all those involved with the Bloom and Action Group are fantastic.

The high level of support from the business community is terrific.

The large number of people giving their time to make Holbeach a better place to live.

Areas suggested for future development

Section A

The Holbeach Community Centre was badly let down by the neglected shrub borders around the main building.

The avenue of trees leading to the Cemetery was very overbearing. Liaise with the local authority on the selective removal of every other tree. This will lead to a more open feel, and also prolong the life of the remaining trees.

Try to get the local Academy School to become more involved.

Section B

Not a lot was said about recycling, local heritage, or conservation and biodiversity.

Consider interpretation panels for the Carters Park stone artwork, and the work to restore the Chapel in Holbeach Cemetery.

Section C

Make greater use of the 15 minute presentation to highlight elements of the judging criteria that will not be seen to any great effect on the tour. Try to show more evidence of year round involvement. Also try to show examples of press coverage, newsletters etc.

Continue to attract new members to the group.

Continue to look at ways of raising funds to support the bloom effort.

Look at the structure of the tour. A lot of time was spent travelling to see the glasshouses where the plants are grown which the judges felt was unnecessary. The time could have been better spent looking at the school grounds or meeting some of the key people along the route.

A – 68 B – 30 C – 32 Total 130

SMALL TOWNS

Alford: Bronze Award 116 points

○ Judges Award – The Manor House Garden and its Volunteer gardeners

Judged on 10th July Judges John Simpson and Jeff Bates

As a brand-new entrant, this was a most commendable effort. The town has many strengths, and the enthusiasm of Brian Belcher and Carol Charlton to show them off was a pleasure to see. It was also really pleasing to note how successful you have been in getting support from all aspects of the community for this first entry into East Midlands in Bloom. The undoubted highlight of the tour was the Manor House – a remarkable example of what a community can achieve through voluntary effort, and a garden to be re-visited many times.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

In a short space of time since inception, these are many! The floral displays in the market places, on almost all of the shop fronts (Angelene's Patisserie, Yellowbelly music, Lloyds TSB, Paul Saywell Butchers all deserve particular mention), at the Anchor pub etc are a great effort and cheer up the 'village' scene so much. We must note the quality and innovative planting styles of Vic Buckley for all of this – excellent on every occasion seen.

The Memorial Recreation Ground – a community-run park – is very well kept, with high quality play equipment all in good condition, and attractive horticultural areas, all well mulched.

The tour concluded at the Manor House, where the new (2010) garden is a delight, with old trees incorporated into a new design which includes a 'local variety' orchard, wild meadow, vegetables, pergolas, sculpture and so much more. Outstanding!

SECTION B

Much of the achievement in this section relates to the marvellous Manor House: here the wildflower meadow is a splendid feature; there is excellent rainwater harvesting and composting; wonderful modern design in a historic context, supported by stunning modern art and sculpture; a heritage orchard featuring Lincolnshire apple varieties. However, we would also note that the town is clean, with no significant litter to be seen and no dog-fouling.

SECTION C

The base for the bloom campaign is the Alford and District Horticultural Society, with a network of members across East Lindsey; it is good to note, though, that residents and businesses in the town have taken on board your efforts to get the initiative underway with some enthusiasm. The George Inn is to be commended on allowing you to hold meetings there.

Most notable, once again, is the remarkable Manor House, owned and managed by voluntary effort through the Alford Civic Trust.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

You now need to organise a tour of the town based on the range of areas that appear on the marking sheet, as there are opportunities to see other areas (a school, more residential gardens etc) that are not yet being shown.

Also, links between the church garden and the bloom effort should be developed, and guidance should be given to those businesses that are lacking horticultural expertise to develop their ability to better care for their planted features and areas. However, this is not a major issue and the most notable thing in section A is how good the horticultural efforts are.

SECTION B

The Wolds Grift Drain is a potentially valuable natural site running through the town (in part culverted); perhaps you could discuss with the Wildlife Trust whether there are opportunities for improved management of the site?

Also, discuss with Vic Buckley details of the compost used in the containers (is it peat-free or peat-reduced?) and look to improve the quality and accessibility of the signage of your historic town.

SECTION C

There are great strides to be made in this section of the report, simply by developing a structure to what you are doing, and a plan for how you want to move forward. One area to begin with is to take photographs of the various efforts and attractions through the seasons, so as to have the basis for a portfolio for your 2014 entry. We encourage you to attend the 2014 EMiB workshop – February 20th, in Immingham – where you will be able to get

advice from judges but also speak to experienced entrants and gain from their knowledge and support. You may also wish to ask for a free advisory visit at some point before next spring.

Try also to make direct contact with the schools, young person's groups, other voluntary organisations in the town to make them aware of – and perhaps gain their support for - your efforts.

Most of all though – this is a most encouraging first entry and one that has the potential to go to the next level, or beyond, very quickly.

A – 69 B – 29 C – 18 Total 116

SMALL TOWNS

Bracebridge Heath: Bronze Award 116 points

○ Judges Award – The Bracebridge Heath in Bloom team

Judged on 10th July Judges John Simpson and Jeff Bates

This is a commendable first-time entry, built upon a strong community base. We were pleased to meet with a good selection of Bloom supporters, and in particular note the valuable input from the Lincolnshire Cooperative, where the display from the young schoolchildren in the foyer of the store was striking. You have tackled head-on major initiatives right from the start, with the creation of the wildlife garden at the site of the old asylum a huge – but already quite successful – challenge. We concluded the tour with the ‘mural’ at the Agrii building, and hope that not too many accidents are caused by it over the next few weeks...

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The gardens at both St John’s Church and the Methodist Church are really attractive, and entirely the result of volunteer effort.

The allotments are well-managed and busy, with new ploholders making a promising start.

Good residential gardens are to be seen on Worcester Close, and we also noted the quality grounds of the retirement complex adjacent to the old asylum buildings.

The recreation ground is a well-used green space, and the old, redundant cemetery of the asylum is developing into an attractive meadow.

The Bull public house has a tidy ‘beer garden’.

SECTION B

Fabulous work to do what you have, in such a short space of time, at the Wildlife Garden. It has specific expertise through the support of Sam Wardhan of Red Dog Films, as well as the clear support of so many of the community. We were pleased to note that you source local materials and have peat-free and organic compost in use for your containers.

You have instigated a regular monthly ‘tidy-up’ event, with excellent support and clear benefits. The route was quite clean, with no evidence of dog-fouling. You have already had a successful graffiti removal activity at the old cemetery, and there has been no recurrence of the problem. And then there is the ‘art installation’ at the Agrii building...

SECTION C

A tremendous community effort and one that is clearly gaining support all the time. Well done to being the first ‘community champions’ for the Co-op; also for getting so many out on your tidy-up days; and for the lovely work of the children in their display.

Your newsletters appear quarterly and are very positive outlets to advise everyone of what you do and how they can help; you have also got the support of the various local radio stations. All in all, for a novice group – tremendous!

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

This is an area that you will be able to develop effectively on the basis of this first entry, in particular by reviewing the tour to show the maximum possible range of horticultural features, and by encouraging some of the businesses to develop some floral or permanent enhancements.

Although the Co-op cannot have baskets, the wide pavement there could benefit from containers; you could also put the ‘Tesco’ shopping area on the route, as it appears to have some quite tidy landscaping.

Try to engage the school in gardening activities; work with voluntary groups to do more to enhance the splendid Village Hall.

SECTION B

Hopefully you will be able to show off some of your heritage as part of future tours, with the Water tower unfortunately inaccessible due to the builders, and of course the asylum (St John’s Hospital) also screened off.

Otherwise, concentrate your efforts in this section on further developing the areas that you already have – the wildlife garden, the meadow in the cemetery etc – by continued appropriate management and enhancement.

SECTION C

This is already good, and can get quickly get better. Develop the route to take in more of the town and what you are doing; record more of what you do through the year, and take photos of everything.

Develop formal links with the school. Work with other communities to develop a NK 'Bloom' network. Try to attend the EMiB New Entrants Workshop in Immingham next February, where you will be able to get ideas and learn from experienced entrants.

Most of all, keep doing what you are doing, keep enjoying the experience, and panic over what the next art installation can be to 'top' the 2013 version...

A – 56 B – 26 C – 34 Total 116

LARGE VILLAGES

🏆 **Caistor: Gold Award and Category Winner 186 points**

○ **Judges Award – the community of Caistor for their Blooming Enthusiasm**

Judged on 8th July Judges Chris Beal and Alan Fletcher

The tour started at the Market Place where the local flower club had decorated the village pump. The tour around the village saw a wonderful topiary elephant, the wildlife pond at Westbrooke Grove is impressive in a residential area. The sponsored beds throughout the village particularly on the highway are a credit to the community.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The quality and quantity of planters and baskets around the Market place is impressive.

The churchyard with all of its features was a delight to visit.

The herbaceous perennial bed at the Crocosmia Gardens car park area is a horticultural delight.

The grounds at Sealord are a credit to the grounds staff.

SECTION B

The wildlife pond at Westbrooke Grove is a magnificent example of one of this community's bio-diversity projects

Water collection from the bus shelter roof enables planters here to be watered successfully.

Street furniture maintenance is good.

The new Roman Centurion carving is impressive.

SECTION C

The commitment and enthusiasm of the community in Caistor will ensure the bloom continues.

Local business support is impressive.

Areas suggested for future developments

SECTION A

Continue with plans to enter South Street Park into the Green Flag Community Award.

We heard about the Community Orchard, is it within the judging route to enable a visit to take place?

Likewise the allotments.

SECTION B

Explain to judges about recycling initiatives within the village.

Continue with plans for interpretation at the Roman Centurion.

SECTION C

Consider an interpretation board at the grammar school memorial garden to explain about the medicinal uses of the plants.

Continue with what you are doing and how you are doing it: it works and the benefits are there for all to see.

A – 91 B – 46 C – 49 Total 186

LARGE VILLAGES

Market Bosworth: Gold Award 183 points

○ Judges Award – The Staff at the Fire Station for their grounds maintenance

Judged on 1st July Judges Chris Beal and Geoff Spate

The tour started with a viewing of the hand cart, the latest addition to the varied planters throughout the village. The tour saw traditional cottages adorned with floral displays and the country park wildflower meadow with all its orchids was an impressive sight. The tour concluded with a viewing of the skeleton of Richard III by the Dixie Grammar School.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The number of flower troughs and baskets throughout the town maintained by the Bloom group is commendable. Business premises particularly the fire station and the Black Horse public house are maintained to an exceptional standard.

Working with year 8 children from Dixie Grammar School on their designs for the beds in front of the school.

SECTION B

The standards of cleanliness throughout the village are a credit to the community.

The differential mowing regimes around the trees within the country park provides a wildlife haven as well as protecting the trees from mower damage.

SECTION C

The volume of community support and sponsorship ensures that the bloom initiative continues to thrive.

Year round activities are evident.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Continue with your works at the Railway Station, this may make a future “It’s Your Neighbourhood” entry.

SECTION B

Provide more information to the judges on recycling initiatives

Consider a tree trail leaflet for the arboretum as there are some fine specimen trees here lost within a woodland setting.

SECTION C

The only comment we can make here is to continue with what you are doing in the way you are doing it: the Bloom in Market Bosworth continues to thrive.

A – 92 B – 45 C – 46 Total 183

LARGE VILLAGES

Donington: Gold Award 170 points

○ Judges Award – The Chronometer Garden at Matthew Flinders Park

Judged on 3rd July Judges Chris Beal and Alan Fletcher

The Donington tour commenced at the Market Place at the Matthew Flinders statue. The tour saw a wonderful wildlife garden at the school and the recreation ground maintained by the local youngsters complete with a personalised graffiti wall. The tour finished at the excellently maintained Matthew Flinders Park where the newly planted Chronometer beds were an impressive sight.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Flinders Park is an excellent community asset, the new chronometer beds are developing well.

The church yard is well maintained.

The work at the Cowley Endowed School, particularly the wildlife garden, is impressive.

SECTION B

The Arnhem Oak in this well maintained churchyard is a unique feature and gives wonderful opportunity to introduce the history of the village.

The Flinders statue and associated interpretation board in the Market Place advertises the village's history and links to good effect.

The harvested water systems, electric powered water bowsers and cleaning machine are all worthy of note.

SECTION C

The works by the Flinders Founders at their skate-park is impressive, particularly how they link into other bloom initiatives throughout the village.

There is strong evidence of community spirit & involvement throughout the village overseen by a dedicated community.

Year round activity is plentiful.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The raised beds by the varied Community groups are looking a little tired in places.

Use the time taken to see the greenhouse (empty at this time of year) to see more projects in the village, the greenhouse is well covered in the portfolio.

Continue communication with the County Council regarding roadside verge maintenance.

SECTION B

Identify and look to improve vacant sites i.e. Red Cow Hotel.

Inform judges on recycling initiatives within the village.

Overseed or plant plugs in the wildflower meadow in the autumn, they will quickly establish and rectify this year's mowing mistake.

SECTION C

A pictorial calendar of works by the school would show what they do all year round in their garden

Work on tidying the perimeter of the allotments.

Look at additional local business involvement.

A – 84 B – 41 C – 45 Total 170

LARGE VILLAGES

Milford: Silver Gilt Award 151 points

○ Judges Award – Blooming Milford's contribution to planting in the Village

Judged on 1st July Judges Chris Beal and Geoff Spate

The first tour of this year's Large Village judging started in the old British Legion Club now managed by the community as a social club. The tour around the village saw the fantastic work produced when a community works together, the community orchard and planters of edibles around the village were just a few examples. Willow sculptures from a local craft session were displayed around the tour. Milford has a promising future in this campaign.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The refurbished play area /recreation ground has provided the community with an area to be proud of.

The quality of the residential gardens seen on the tour throughout the village is impressive.

The design and execution of the Community Orchard is a credit to the Bloom group.

SECTION B

The meadows area although in its infancy shows potential as a future wildlife haven.

The cleanliness throughout the village is impressive.

The heritage of the village is displayed throughout on interpretative panels.

SECTION C

The levels of community participation are worthy of note.

The group has a year round calendar of activities that was evident through the presentation.

Sponsorship of bloom initiatives is impressive.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try and involve children in the visit to the school.

Look at working with both tiers of local authority on bedding design for the planters and wall baskets as impact of these is lacking.

Continue to expand your horticultural projects throughout the village.

SECTION B

Continue with your plans to work with the local authority on a management plan / schedule for the meadows area as a joint venture to establish responsibilities.

Continue with plans to adopt and make a feature of the red telephone box and the surrounding area.

Explain more on recycling throughout the village, e.g. re-use of materials etc.

SECTION C

Try and get the press to attend the judging in future years for a photo opportunity

Consider entering West Terrace in the It's Your Neighbourhood campaign in future years.

Try and get the pupils at the school involved on judging day to explain to the judges what they have been doing in the various gardens.

A – 70 B – 39 C – 42 Total 151

LARGE VILLAGES

Kirton in Lindsey: Bronze Award 116 points

Judged on 8th July Judges Chris Beal and Alan Fletcher

The tour started with a trip to the new wetland nature reserve; although in its infancy the reserve is well populated by a wide variety of water fowl. Around the village many flower beds were seen including improvements to some beds and a discussion over future plans for others. The recreation ground was extremely well maintained and used. The visit finished with a tour of the newly refurbished and extensively used Town Hall.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The works to the mill stone beds have improved this gateway into the village.

The village recreation ground is well maintained.

Flower beds within the village are of a good standard.

SECTION B

The wetland nature reserve although in its infancy is developing well.

Cleanliness within the village is worthy of note.

The new baskets and planters at the Market Place brighten up this area.

SECTION C

The community is well represented in year round events.

Year round activity is evidenced through the portfolio.

Seek out sources of local sponsorship for the baskets, planters etc.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Try and liaise further with the County Council regarding maintenance standards within the village or timing so that cutting takes place prior to judging.

Show more residential and business premises on the tour.

SECTION B

Try and get the owner of the nature reserve to the judging to discuss management, future plans etc.

Investigate possibility of the roadside bank at churchyard being developed as a wildflower area; it has great potential for this.

Explain more about recycling initiatives that take place within the Community.

SECTION C

Although much is covered in the portfolio, judges felt that the judging tour could have shown a lot more of the village in detail.

Use the time that is allowed for the tour and structure it around the judging criteria, (available on the EMiB website).

Try and get the press involved, not just on judging day but throughout the year.

A – 52 B – 32 C – 32 Total 116

LARGE VILLAGES

Burgh le Marsh: Certificate of Achievement 90 points

Judged on 3rd July Judges Chris Beal and Alan Fletcher

The tour of Burgh Le Marsh started with an introduction to the planned renovation works at the Windmill. The tour of the village saw some delightful gardens and planters on the highway. The tour finished with a viewing of the butterfly & bee garden and the fabulous wetland wildflower meadow. This is only the second year for Burgh Le Marsh and this entry shows great potential for the future.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The planters and baskets around the village are of good quality.

The churchyard looked well maintained.

There were some good residential gardens seen on the tour.

The peace garden at the windmill constructed with donated plants and materials shows how the community comes together for bloom initiatives.

SECTION B

The private nature reserve is an absolute gem.

Continue with plans for grazing and a wildflower meadow at the windmill overspill car park area.

SECTION C

The commitment by the bloom committee will ensure this entry continues to improve.

Year round activity was evident from the presentation.

The Peace Garden at the Windmill from community donated plants is well maintained.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Show and tell the judges about the planters around the village, which group is responsible for maintenance, planting etc..

We saw the village recreation ground at a distance through the trees; is it worthy of a visit?

SECTION B

Use places on the judging tour that have full public access for maximum scoring effect.

Explain / show more on local heritage.

Tell the judges about recycling in the community.

SECTION C

Structure the tour around the judging criteria.

Seek out other groups within the Community, i.e. churches, youth groups and link together for the bloom initiative.

Seek out local business sponsorship .

A – 47 B – 24 C – 19 Total 90

VILLAGES

Rosliston in Bloom: Silver Gilt Award and Category Winner 166 points

○ **Judges Award – Paul Marbrow for 21 years of commitment to Bloom**

Judged on 4th July Judges Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

The Rosliston Bloom team gave the judges a warm welcome and a tour which showed the very best of the village, highlights included the floral displays in the village centre and the high quality of residential front gardens.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The quality of the plants and the displays at the village centre were excellent, a real horticultural centrepiece and the use of edibles a clever addition. Plus the major enhancement of the shrub bed beside the village hall.

The continuing use of the school vegetable beds and their plans to develop their new garden and play area.

SECTION B

The litter free environment and well swept roads and pavements across the village.

The reuse of their own home produced compost in the potting on of the bedding and soil improvement of the beds.

The clean and well maintained benches in the village centre.

SECTION C

The diverse education programme for schools and families at Rosliston forestry centre.

The good relationship with the local papers, published articles and radio coverage.

The overview at the presentation set the scene well for the tour.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Ensure the judges are shown all highlights of the village, more of the wonderful front gardens could have been covered on the tour.

Work with other groups in the village to enhance under-utilised areas of the village to maximise more of the judging criteria.

Consider some additional planting in the Jubilee garden to increase the colour and textures within the garden area.

The Extend group in the ever expanding planting on the muck spreader - consider its location so overhead shade doesn't diminish the wonderful displays.

SECTION B

Various planters and wall baskets including the ones at the front of the school and in village centre require a lick of paint.

Show the judges around more of the Forestry Centre meadows and woodland to maximise points.

Consider if some of the local heritage stories can be told through the Bloom.

SECTION C

Try to attract new members to the Bloom team to ensure its continued quality and successes.

Consider raising more funds through fun activities, with the money used to help purchase more plants reducing the pressure on the growing team.

Work in partnership with Church to enhance their grounds and include it on the tour.

A – 88 B – 37 C – 41 Total 166

VILLAGES

Middleton by Wirksworth: Silver Gilt Award 150 points

○ Judges Award – Wildflower Meadows at Red Hill Quarry and the High Peak Trail

Judged on 3rd July Judges Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

Middleton is nestled delightfully in the Derbyshire Dales, the Bloom efforts are helping to transform the area from an industrial landscape of quarries and mines into a beautiful, environmentally-friendly tourist destination.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The whole village showed sustainable improvement from 2012, with more colourful displays and participation in communal areas from more villagers and within their own gardens.

The edible tubs with a lovely mix of floral and vegetable plants. The school garden has a range of interesting and educational features in the garden including the chickens whose eggs are used in the school breakfast club!!

The Blooming Dales competition is a really positive initiative and hopefully Middleton will have some successful entrants.

SECTION B

The Eco centre for its continuing development of the centre's displays, interpretation and diversity of its courses. The village is looking lovely and clean with pride in residents' homes apparent. Judges look forward to seeing the interpretation panel at the old cutting shed location to commemorate the war graves stone masons.

SECTION C

Continue the good work with Community Payback and TCV and encourage other volunteer organisations to help with some of the larger tasks across the village, e.g. the heavy pruning works in the Millennium gardens.

The great work of the school in the education of the children in gardening and the countryside.

The effect of the "Bloom" on the two local pubs which are keeping up appearances which is great for the village and the pubs.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Continue to encourage villagers to enhance their frontages and try to organise another Middleton goes Potty or may be a "secret" open gardens day which include the lovely gardens the judges visited which would enable the judges to allocate more marks to this aspect.

Work with the District Council to enhance further the church yard, much of which could be managed for wildlife.

Continue the restoration works in the Millennium garden, displaying a copy of the restoration plans within the gardens for visitors to see.

Continue the enhancement works at the cross roads, taking some long term decisions on what you would like the area to look like in a few years time.

SECTION B

The weeding and sweeping of paving and gullies across the village is required; maybe community payback could help with this?

Consider enhancing the village's entrance signs and ensuring that any planting around them fits in and is appropriate with the surrounding landscape and countryside. Perhaps Stone entrance signs?!

Continue the good work of painting the benches in the Millennium garden with the other benches on the village green: if funds allow consider more benches placed where people can enjoy the wonderful views across Middleton. From the High Peak Trail make visitors aware of the village facilities and pubs to encourage additional trade into the village. Work with the District Council planners to ensure the new housing development offers some benefits to the existing Middleton community and environment.

SECTION C

Judges suggest a 15 min overview at the beginning of the tour to set the scene and go through the portfolio.

Ensuring the already successful portfolio includes all evidence of year round activities, i.e. planting the tubs, bulb planting and the fund raising activities and any press the village has received.

As the Bloom takes hold in the village, try to expand on the fund raising activities with autumn/ winter events which might help to fund bulb plantings or winter planters.

The "Village Pump" - consider a gardening advice section that would help people to join in with the Bloom.

A – 70 B – 41 C – 39 Total 150

VILLAGES

Lark Hill Village: Silver Award 149 points

○ Judges Award – Improvements to the Village Pond, through the commitment of Brian Leatherland

Judged on 5th July Judges Doug Stacey and Jo Tarrant

There was huge contrast from last year in the weather, and the beautiful sunshine helped to highlight the continuing improvements across this entrant, from the floral displays to the flourishing pond life and productive vegetable plots.

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The residential gardens are wonderful - a riot of colour, interest and impeccably maintained throughout.

Successful growing of the herbs for the Lark Hill Restaurant.

The communal shrubberies are all well maintained and weed free.

SECTION B

The whole site was very clean and tidy.

The beautiful benches created by the woodworking group that are placed around the grounds

The selling of engraved names in the decking to raise funds to continue the improvements to the Bird hide.

The pond area is a wonderful haven for wildlife and in its second year is looking very promising.

SECTION C

The ever growing numbers in the gardening club with its enthusiasm to enhance the landscape and gardens of Lark Hill.

The impressive sales from the plants grown in the greenhouse and the compost resale to residents.

The continued success in the Green Flag award.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Ensure that areas of “adopted” shrub beds don’t become over fussy and labour intensive to maintain.

The trees are now ready to have their tree stakes removed, in addition either bark mulch the bases or use strimmer guards to protect from damage by mowers. Ask the contractor to freshen up the bark mulch on any bare areas.

If funds and labour allows continue to enhance the entrance to Lark Hill with more floral and year-round displays.

Consider additional herb planters for more varieties for the restaurant use.

SECTION B

Liaise with the contractor over the management of the grass lands and meadow area for a successful wildlife habitat. Try to arrange weed spraying on the block paved areas to ensure they don’t take hold.

Consider what could be incorporated into the landscape to tell the “story” of Lark Hill, encourage the Art groups to get involved with projects outside of the buildings.

Ask the Woodworking Group if they are able to provide more seats around the pond area.

Fit a number of water butts to the greenhouse to utilise the large roof space and its integral guttering.

SECTION C

Broaden the remit of the garden club meetings to include garden visits and speakers to encourage knowledge and high standards.

Continue to work closely with the Tram and A453 contractors to ensure the physical views and views of the residents are represented and the Tram car park is well landscaped with trees.

Encourage more outside groups especially youth groups into Lark Hill and work with residents on environmental projects i.e. the Bird Hide.

A – 73 B – 37 C – 39 Total 149

SMALL VILLAGES

Barton in Fabis: Silver Gilt Award and Category Winner 168 points

- **Judges Award – Sensitive planting around the Village Centre**

Judged on 4th July Judges Ian Cooke and Richard Adams

It was a pleasure to visit Barton in Fabis which with its wide spread community support and involvement and a high level of horticultural achievement was looking at its best for the forthcoming visit of the national In Bloom judges

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The enhanced beds with appropriate planting in the churchyard.

The choice of plant material and use of appropriate containers throughout the village.

The restructuring of road side verges where erosion had taken place

SECTION B

The overall standard of cleanliness and freedom from litter throughout was very high

The use of the churchyard as a focus for conservation and wildlife is commendable.

The residents' initiative in repair and maintenance of signs adds to the sense of pride of place

SECTION C

The wide spread involvement of the community in the Bloom activities especially that of the children is commendable.

For a community of this size the number of fund raising initiatives is outstanding.

The preparation of a 3 year plan is an excellent way of ensuring on-going commitment to the Bloom.

The comprehensive portfolio and printed itinerary made the job of judging a pleasure

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

The inclusion of the farm shop (with appropriate planting) and the dovecote in any future entry would strengthen the business and heritage aspects of the submission.

There is scope for a limited amount of additional tree and shrub planting within Barton in Fabis and possibly some sustainable planting at the approach to the village.

SECTION B

Try to find an opportunity to introduce art into the village landscape.

The inclusion of the dovecote into the submission might be used to reflect the heritage of the village.

Is there a way in which the innovative use of containers could be taken further? How about painting the wheelbarrows?

SECTION C

Just keep up the good work!

A – 86 B – 39 C – 43 Total 168

SMALL VILLAGES

Elmton: Silver Award 132 points

○ Judges Award – the garden at the Pinfold

Judged on 5th July Judges Ian Cooke and Richard Adams

It was a pleasure to visit Elmton and to be able to share the enthusiasm and pride which the residents feel for this very attractive village. The judges particularly enjoyed hearing about the creation of the well dressing and the plans for next year's event

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The well dressing was not only an important element of the In Bloom entry but the Tree of Life theme was particularly relevant.

The quality of the design and planting of the Pinfold Garden was once again a key element of the tour

SECTION B

The archaeological survey and public dig followed by a talk was a good example of the way in which public awareness of the heritage can be raised

SECTION C

The level of community involvement in the design and creation of the well dressing is commendable.

The judges were pleased to see the progress on the elm tree project but do make sure that the tree is cared for

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

As in previous years the judges feel that some sympathetic planting at the entrance to the village would be appropriate.

The small area in front of the well would benefit from some planting, perhaps on a cottage garden theme.

There is scope for a limited amount of additional tree and shrub planting within the village.

SECTION B

Try to bring a stronger focus on conservation and wildlife into the submission.

Consider further emphasis on the village heritage such as the Pinfold area.

Some items of street furniture such as the village notice board are in need of a little TLC!

There is an urgent need to work with the Local Authority to agree an appropriate mowing regime for the highly significant green area to protect the Bee orchids and other flora

SECTION C

Prepare a portfolio for the judges along the lines of the guidance provided to all entrants.

Preparing a 3 year plan for future projects would give you and local residents' targets to work towards and ensure that you improve your performance in the competition.

Consider reprinting the village trail leaflet. Would the local pub sponsor it?

A – 69 B – 31 C – 32 Total 132

SMALL VILLAGES

Little Cawthorpe: Silver Award 130 points

○ Judges Award: the Royal Oak pub and hotel for innovative timber sculptures

Judged on 2nd July Judges Richard Adams and Ian Cooke

Little Cawthorpe is a delightful village on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Although the small team of residents were a little unprepared with their entry, their friendly welcome and impromptu tour of the village shows that with some additional community involvement they have the basis of a very good entry for future years

Areas of Achievement

Section A

Throughout the village the standard of planting in residential gardens was very high and appropriate to the rural setting.

The grounds of the Royal Oak was maintained to a high standard with a good selection of floral displays and wooden sculptures

The well maintained churchyard and adjoining grassed area form an attractive focal point at the southern entrance to the village

Section B

The area around the Watering Stone with its information panel was a good example of the sympathetic way which attention is drawn to the village's heritage.

The introduction of art into the landscape whether by the gorilla in the private garden or the Honda in the grounds of the Royal Oak was commendable

Section C

The attractiveness of the village and the care and involvement of the residents is reflected in the awards other than In Bloom which it has been awarded in the past.

Areas suggested for future development

Section A

Consider improving the approach to the village by introducing some appropriate planting in the vicinity of the village sign.

The area in the vicinity of the village pond and church, although attractive, might be further enhanced by a limited amount of sustainable planting

Section B

Despite the small size of the village there is sufficient horticultural and historic interest to justify considering a village trail and leaflet.

The Orchid Meadow is an outstanding feature but not accessible to the general public. Would it be possible to open it to the public or even the local school on a limited basis?

Some of the street furniture in the village such as the sign at the village entrance and the name sign by the pond was in need of a face lift

Section C

If the village is to progress further in the Bloom competition, which it is obviously capable of, then a priority must be to get a small group of residents representing all ages and interests together to plan the way forward.

One of the projects which the group might consider is the preparation of a village trail. How about asking the Royal Oak to become involved?

Prepare a portfolio for any future entry showing year round horticultural and environmental activity.

A – 72 B -35 C – 23 Total 130 points

SMALL VILLAGES

Richmond Village: Silver Award 128 points

○ **Judges Award – Nick Ives, the gardener at Richmond Village**

Judged on 3rd July Judges Ian Cooke & Richard Adams

Despite the fact that this was a first time entrant and no portfolio had been submitted or judging route prepared, Nick Ives gave a comprehensive tour and presentation of this attractive retirement complex and impressed the judges with his knowledge and enthusiasm

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

Throughout the village the landscaping provided a good balance of sustainable planting with minimal areas of high maintenance bedding.

Maintenance in all areas was of a high standard.

Imaginative use was made of areas of open space by such features as a small putting green

SECTION B

The overall standard of cleanliness and maintenance throughout the site was commendably high.

The judges were impressed by the distribution of the well screened composting areas throughout the site

SECTION C

The enthusiastic involvement of the residents in the creation of the sensory garden.

The sympathetic way in which Nick has made amendments to the planting and layout to incorporate the individual needs of some of the residents.

The incorporation of features from residents' previous gardens to create a sense of identity and belonging.

Areas for Development

SECTION A

Consider the possibility of including the attractively landscaped grounds of the pub adjoining the site into a future entry.

The inclusion of the allotments used by the residents into the judges' tour would be an advantage.

The provision of a small greenhouse on the site would give an added opportunity for residents to become involved in the Bloom entry.

SECTION B

Try to identify and incorporate a link with local heritage in any future entry.

More provision for the encouragement of wildlife such as the provision of nesting boxes would not only be supporting the environmental objectives of the Bloom but would also bring additional interest for the residents

SECTION C

Try to encourage even more resident involvement in the Bloom entry.

Provide evidence of year-round activity in a portfolio.

Explore the possibility of involving young people from the surrounding area working with residents on an environmental or horticultural initiative

A – 68 B – 33 C – 27 Total 128

SMALL VILLAGES

St Crispin Village: Silver Award 122 points

○ Judges Award – Linda and Shirley and their gardening at the Restaurant

Judged on 3rd July Judges Ian Cooke and Richard Adams

Beryl Harper and her enthusiastic team of residents bring year round colour and interest to this retirement village. The redeveloped restaurant garden looks splendid and the ongoing work on the terrace project is impressive

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The redeveloped restaurant garden is now looking splendid and many of the private gardens have colourful borders and pots.

The planning of the new terrace area is an achievement in itself and the judges look forward to the completion of this before next year

SECTION B

The recycling of green waste and manufacture of compost is commendable, particularly considering the little support that is given to the residents in this heavy work.

The many water butts are a great asset, assisting in maintenance and recycling water.

The general cleanliness and tidiness of the garden areas is good.

SECTION C

The overall involvement of a number of the residents in various small jobs is commendable.

It is good to see the detailed consultation on the new terrace project and the plans for funding.

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Suggest planting of vigorous climbers amongst front boundary hedge

SECTION B

Many of the private gardens include empty pots and untidy bric-a-brac. The judges suggest that a tidy-up day might be organised to dispose of unwanted items and redistribute pots or other useful resources.

The butterfly garden is a good resource and this could be extended with further plantings to encourage butterflies and bees.

Additional bird-nesting boxes could be constructed by the woodworking team to add to the gardens.

It seems that little is known of the heritage and history of this site and possibly this is an area for research

SECTION C

The judges suggest you continue to try and get support from organisations outside the community and particularly from local schools and colleges. The new terrace project might be a suitable project for such involvement.

We would also suggest that the management should be pressed for further support to Beryl both in terms of manual labour and secure funding for all the work she does.

A – 58 B – 32 C – 32 Total 122

SMALL VILLAGES

Ranby: Certificate of Achievement 89 points

○ **Judges Award – Clive Hebdon for dedication to the cause of Ranby in Bloom**

Judged on 5th July Judges Ian Cooke and Richard Adams

Despite a year that has been plagued with problems and a shortage of support, Ranby has continued to support East Midlands in Bloom with a valiant entry. Hopefully fresh support will enable them to re-group for next year

Areas of Achievement

SECTION A

The acquisition of a playing field for the village is an exciting prospect for the future.

The return of the hanging baskets to the Chequer's pub is appreciated

SECTION B

The sowing of wildflowers in the old horse paddock is a valid new use for this area

SECTION C

The planned meeting to reconsider the future of the Bloom initiative is a key stage in planning for the future.

The creation of a simple portfolio is a step forward

Areas suggested for future development

SECTION A

Most areas of planting need refurbishment and protection from rabbits.

Encourage the school to become involved and include this on the judging route.

Although grass cutting has been maintained, more attention is needed to edges and corners to give a better finish.

Persuade the landlord to mow the canal-side beer garden.

Try to encourage residents to make more of their front gardens and re-establish some sort of competition

SECTION B

Recognise more areas specifically for their wildlife potential. In particular the woodland has great possibilities.

Consider cutting pathways to allow access.

In general street furniture and signage need attention, cleaning or re-painting.

Investigate the heritage of the area, possibly the canal and create some display material.

Make more emphasis on recycling and other environmental issues.

Consider the possibilities of art in the landscape, possibly with involvement from the school

SECTION C

Recruitment of a strong stable workforce is essential to the continuation of the Bloom initiative.

Try to include a range of pictures in the portfolio of events through the year and the village at other seasons.

The judges suggest an action plan to put Ranby in Bloom back on an even keel for the future. A series of events and work parties would address many of the problems outlined above.

Make sure information on events is sent to the local press

A – 45 B – 26 C – 18 – Total 89

MARKING SHEET (the same for all categories)

As per the 3 RHS Core Pillars: Section A 50%; Section B 25%; Section C 25%

SECTION A – Horticultural Achievement			
Assessing year-round horticultural achievement including conservation and natural areas:			
		MAX	ACT.
A1.	Impact – <i>design, colours, appropriate choice of plants, special features, presentation, innovation</i>	20	
A2.	Horticultural practice – <i>cultivation and maintenance, quality of plants, sustainability, new planting</i>	20	
A3.	Residential and Community Gardening – <i>residential, communal areas, allotments, public buildings (grounds of churches, schools etc.), car parks</i>	20	
A4.	Business Areas and Premises – <i>retail and shopping areas, leisure sites, transport terminals, car parks, farms, rural businesses, pubs, post offices, tourist areas/attractions, offices, estate agents etc.</i>	20	
A5.	Green Spaces – <i>verges, parks and open public spaces</i>	20	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION A <i>50% of maximum points</i>		100	
Areas of Achievement:			
Areas for Improvement:			
SECTION B – Environmental Responsibility			
Assessing year-round activities improving environmental responsibility:			
		MAX	ACT.
B1.	Conservation and biodiversity – <i>wildlife areas, natural habitat</i>	10	
B2.	Resource management – <i>recycling, minimising demand placed on natural resources and any harmful impact on the environment</i>	10	
B3.	Local heritage – <i>management and development of local heritage and/or identity, inclusive of natural heritage</i>	10	
B4.	Local environmental quality – <i>management of vacant premises and plots, litter, graffiti, fly-posting, dog fouling etc.</i>	10	
B5.	Pride of place – <i>management of street furniture, signage, art in the landscape and hard landscaping</i>	10	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION B <i>25% of maximum points</i>		50	
Areas of Achievement:			
Areas for Improvement:			

SECTION C – Community Participation			
Assessing year-round community participation:			
		MAX	ACT.
C1.	Development and continuity - <i>Development and sustainability of the local bloom initiative and evidence of on-going projects</i>	10	
C2.	Communication and education – <i>community awareness and understanding, engagement with schools and young people and/or other community groups, press coverage, publicity materials</i>	10	
C3.	Community participation – <i>community involvement is representative of the community's size and diversity</i>	10	
C4.	Year-round involvement – <i>schedules of events and supporting evidence of year-round activity (primary evidence to be presented in 15 minute presentation)</i>	10	
C5.	Funding and Support – <i>initiatives to secure on-going support for the local bloom campaign including local business support</i>	10	
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION C <i>25% of maximum points</i>		50	
Areas of Achievement:			
Areas for Improvement:			
GRAND TOTAL POINTS AWARDED		200 <i>(max.)</i>	
MEDAL AWARDED			

<u>MEDAL</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
GOLD	170-200
SILVER GILT	150-169
SILVER	120-149
BRONZE	100-119
CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT	0-99