



SOUTH WEST

RHS South West in Bloom Autumn Newsletter 2024



Bath In Bloom 60th Anniversary Champions of Britain In Bloom

Congratulations to Bath in Bloom, Bath BID and the many community groups, volunteers and businesses that contributed to Bath's Gold Medal and 60th Anniversary win of the RHS Britain in Bloom UK Awards.



This is an unparalleled record and represents the continual acceptance that Bloom has kept pace with the varied changes and demands of communities throughout the UK.

Golden Cannington in Bloom attained a Gold Medal with an exciting and interesting Campaign. What a team effort!

Yeovil in Bloom are sincerely congratulated on their Silver Gilt

Medal, and the special Community Champion recognition awarded to Steve Fox for his dedication and valuable contribution he has given to Bloom over the years.

Glastonbury in Bloom, congratulations on not only achieving a Gold Medal, also winning the Exceptional Public Engagement Award for Arts and Culture.

InExeter Bid not only won a Silver Gilt Medal, they were also the overall BID category winner. Congratulations to all involved in! SWinBloom are so pleased to see the gaining strength of the BID category and our trialling of a route whereby businesses are able to make a major contribution to the Bloom campaign in the South West.

Thank you to everyone for the outstanding all round achievements. 2024, one of our best ever South West in Bloom set of results. We are so proud of you all.

Bath in Bloom – 60 Years

The Britain in Bloom competition started in 1964, and Bath in Bloom was formed at the same time with a view to entering. Astonishingly Bath was declared the first overall national winner of this inaugural competition, and so began our ‘in Bloom’ journey. Since then we have gone on to win our category in the national finals a total of 16 times.



Forward to 2024, and we find ourselves in a very different and hugely successful ‘in Bloom’ story. It is Bath’s 60th Anniversary this year and we were determined to make it a year to remember. Apart from our routine weekly tasks of planting, maintenance, litter picking, helping our IYNs, and fundraising, all along we had our eye on the Britain in Bloom Finals.

Our meticulous route planning started in earnest. Who were we going to meet, where will we visit, what problems might we encounter? Pounding the streets, driving the route, examining every inch, copious notes, became the norm for weeks on end.

August 14th was the judging day. The day started well. The sun was shining, which always helps, and the military precision planned route ran like clockwork (which was a first). The day ended with smiles all round and with us feeling quietly confident. Now the wait; over two months until we know our fate. Manchester beckoned.



In the meantime, the BBC One Show had arranged to film Bath in Bloom as part of this year’s RHS friendship theme. Great fun, though five and a half hours of filming came down to five minutes on the first show.

Then October 21st arrived, the Awards at Manchester United’s football ground with about 340 people in attendance from all over the UK.



Bath were seated at a table just in front of the stage. Nerves were evident and we still had to wait until after the drinks reception and lunch.

We survived. Bath were in the small city category. We were first up on stage in our category and were delighted to receive Gold, but were absolutely thrilled to be announced a couple of minutes later as category winner.

Collecting our glass engraved trophy we returned to our seats with mission accomplished. We settled back to enjoy the rest of the awards.

Then the big award, the 2024 National Britain in Bloom Champion. We knew we had put on a good show this year but had no idea we were in the running. With the BBC One Show filming this award on stage and the Radio 2 presenter Richie Anderson hyping up the audience with a rehearsal before filming live; the announcement seeming to take an eternity.

Suddenly, we heard the word 'Bath.' Did he really say that? The penny dropped and out of the blue, we were RHS 2024 Britain in Bloom Champions! Collecting our second larger engraved trophy on stage we were asked to say a few words. Well I can't remember. We had won was all that mattered. All of this was shown again on the One Show that evening.

What a day that turned out to be, and it was all because of a lot of hard work from all sorts of organisations, volunteers, IYN groups, Bath in Bloom, Bath BID, and Bath's wonderful Parks team, all pulling together. What an achievement.

The following days involved more tv appearances on local news stations, radio interviews, quotes for articles, and articles in the press. We had finally enjoyed our "fifteen minutes of fame." A great year for Bath, Britain in Bloom, and friendship. Where does Bath go from here? Polite answers on a postcard please.....

Stephen Brook
Chairman of Bath in Bloom

Regional Results 2024

Town & City Centre

Chippenham GOLD

Winner CHIPPENHAM

BIDS

Bath GOLD

InExeter GOLD

Plymouth Waterfront Partnership
SILVER GILT

Winner BATH

Pennant Village Devon

Stoke in Bloom SILVER

Woolwell in Bloom GOLD

Winner WOOLWELL IN BLOOM

Pennant Village Cornwall

Menheniot Green GOLD

Illogan in Bloom SILVER

Winner MENHENIOT GREEN

Pennant Town (North & South)

Crediton in Bloom SILVER GILT

Burnham-on-Sea & District SILVER GILT

Liskeard in Bloom SILVER GILT

Winner CREDITON IN BLOOM

Mary Mortimer Trophy

Barrington in Bloom GOLD

Charmouth Parish Council SILVER GILT

Poltimore in Bloom GOLD

Chew Stoke in Bloom SILVER GILT

Chew Magna in Bloom GOLD

Plympton St Maurice SILVER GILT

St Buryan Village in Bloom SILVER GILT

Winner CHEW MAGNA IN BLOOM

Ayre Cup

Radstock in Bloom GOLD

Bere Alston in Bloom GOLD

Westfield in Bloom SILVER

Winner BERE ALSTON IN BLOOM

SWTA Cup

Bovey Tracey in Bloom GOLD

Kingsbridge in Bloom GOLD

Winner KINGSBRIDGE IN BLOOM

Preece Cup

Hayle in Bloom GOLD

Winner HAYLE IN BLOOM

Sargent Cup

Blooming Melksham GOLD

Minehead Town Council GOLD

Sidmouth in Bloom GOLD

Winner SIDMOUTH IN BLOOM

Portman Cup

Brixham in Bloom SILVER GILT

Keynsham in Bloom SILVER GILT

Wellington Town Council SILVER

Truro in Bloom GOLD

Tiverton in Bloom SILVER

Winner TRURO IN BLOOM

St Bridget Cup

Barnstaple in Bloom GOLD

Newquay in Bloom GOLD

Portishead in Bloom GOLD

Exmouth in Bloom GOLD

Winner EXMOUTH IN BLOOM

Tesco Cup

Paignton in Bloom GOLD

Torquay in Bloom GOLD

Winner TORQUAY IN BLOOM

Champion of Champions Under 10k

Cannington in Bloom GOLD

Dartmouth Green Partnership SILVER GILT

Glastonbury in Bloom GOLD

Winner GLASTONBURY IN BLOOM

Regional Results 2024

Champion of Champions 10k Plus

South Swindon in Bloom GOLD
Babbacombe Bay in Bloom GOLD
Thornbury in Bloom GOLD
Yeovil in Bloom GOLD

Winner THORNBURY IN BLOOM



**Portman Cup
Truro in Bloom**

**Entry Closing Date For
The 2025 South West
In Bloom Competition
Saturday 1st March**



**Mary Mortimer Trophy
Chew Magna in Bloom**



**SWTA Cup
Kingsbridge in Bloom**



**Preece Cup
Hayle in Bloom**



**Sargent Cup
Sidmouth in Bloom**

2024 Civic Reception at Bath

This year due to Bath being one of the entries in the first year of Britain in Bloom in 1964, we took this year's Presentation to the spectacular, historic and lovely city of Bath. Part of the history was demonstrated on the night before, when Civic Leaders of our entrants, and Judges were welcomed to a Civic Reception in the spectacular Roman Baths.



We were hosted by The Right Worshipful The Mayor of Bath Councillor Michelle O'Doherty and accompanied by Councillor Karen Walker, Chairman of BANES.

Entertainment was by the City of Bath Brass Band, which sounded magnificent in such a special location.

The Mayor of Bath welcomed everyone to the City, thanking South West in Bloom for bringing the Presentation back to the Bath, especially on the 60th Anniversary of Britain in Bloom.



Our Chairman, Jon Wheatley responded, thanking the Mayor and Chairman for the welcome and wished Bath and all other entrants success for the following day, and commented on the tremendous effort shown by all of them in what had often been a challenging year.



2024 Awards Presentation at Bath.

The Presentation was held at The Pavilion, which proved an excellent venue with nearly 300 guests joining us for the celebrations. The scene was set with coloured



lighting and the format for the day same as the last few years, featuring Guest Speakers in the morning and the Award Presentation after lunch.

The first speaker was Jim Buttress, which took the form of an interview by one of his old friends Bob Sweet. This proved very entertaining as Jim recalled many (often amusing!) events

that occurred during his many years as a Britain in Bloom Judge.

Jim was followed by Tom Hart Dyke who spoke of his adventures whilst plant hunting around the World. While on one



expedition in the Columbian jungle

he and his fellow companion were captured by Guerrillas and held for nine months, during which time they were threatened with execution. Tom's aim of the trip was to find a Orchid to name after his Grandmother. This sadly did not happen, but while in the jungle he decided to design a world garden and after nine months captive, he managed to talk his way out from the Guerrillas, and listening to Tom we could see how he managed to do this, and get

himself back safe to his home at Lullingstone Castle, where he is now creating that World Garden. In the afternoon Lady Emma, together with The Mayor of Bath, and Chair of B&NES did an excellent job in presenting the Awards, often with a bit of dancing to the add to the occasion!



Photos by Nigel Bloxham

Glendale



London Park managed and maintained by Glendale win top award

Produced by the charity Parks for London, this assessment is rigorous and shows how London borough parks services perform against ten Good Parks criteria, showcasing examples of good practice and case studies. London's inner-city boroughs are punching well above their weight with the top three borough scores in 2024.

Pupils from Downderry Primary school joined the Mayor of Lewisham, Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor, Louise Krupski, local MP's, Ward Councillors, **Glendale** and local residents at Beckenham Place Park to celebrate Lewisham topping the table of the Good Parks for London Report 2024.

Glendale retains Arboricultural Association Approval at Bristol

For more information of Arboricultural services available through Glendale,

visit <https://www.glendale-services.co.uk/services/tree-management/arboriculture-services/>



Wildflower Meadows

Glendale have been hard at work throughout September and October, working with local authorities across the South West to manage wildflower open spaces. We all know the benefits, and of course, if you need any assistance, Jim Edwards at Glendale is pleased to help. Some top tips to ensure your wildflower areas thrive and educate future generations
Mow:

In the first year, mow to a height of 5–7 cm when the meadow reaches 10–20 cm. You can mow 1–4 times, and then mow a couple of times a year after that. Mow on a high setting to avoid removing insects that feed on the grass.

Remove weeds: Pull weeds by hand, such as thistles, docks, and nettles.

Remove cuttings: After mowing, leave the clippings for a couple of days to drop seeds, then rake them up and remove them to reduce soil fertility.

Graze: Instead of mowing, you can graze meadows between autumn and winter.

Sow seeds: In early spring or autumn, sow more seeds for the second year.

Select species: Consider the local environment, such as the climate, hydrology, and soil, when choosing species. You can use native and naturalized seeds from the local area.

Prepare the site: Consider the site's vegetation, whether there are weeds, and if the site is likely to be water-stressed.

Set objectives: Consider what you want to achieve, such as attracting specific animals or having spring and summer flowering.

Survey the site: Identify any potential risks to human health and the environment from previous use of the land



Presentation of 2024 Awards at Bath



**Sponsors Trophy, Best Entry:
Exmouth**



**Abbiss Cup, Best Horticultural
Display Municipal: Torquay**



**Viv Verrier Trophy, Best New
Entry: Barrington in Bloom**



**Sargent Trophy, Outstanding Effort
& Contribution: Kingsbridge in
Bloom**

Champion of Champions 2024



**Winner Under 10K Population:
Glastonbury in Bloom**



**Winner Over 10K Population:
Thornbury in Bloom**

Discretionary Special Awards 2024

Vic Verrier Trophy,	Barrington in Bloom
Abbiss Cup	Torquay Seafront Gardens
City of Bath Trophy	Babbacombe Model Village
Michael McGahey Trophy	Oldway Gardens Volunteer Group
Bruford Cup	Thornbury Castle
Viridor School Composting Trophy	Brymore School, Cannington
London & Manchester Trophy	Exmouth Tiny Forest
Sutton Seeds Cup	Conigre Mead Nature Reserve, Melksham
SW Tourism Trophy, Best Portfolio	Bath in Bloom
SW Tourism, Best Portfolio New Entry	Chew Stoke in Bloom
Sargent Trophy	Kingsbridge in Bloom
SW in Bloom Youth Award	Keynsham Scouts
Barry Cruse Trophy	Portishead in Bloom
Budge Social Media Trophy	Kingsbridge in Bloom
West Country TV Cup	Barnstaple Fire Station
The Monk Trophy	St Georges Flower Bank, Pill
The Health & Wellbeing Trophy	Stanley's Garden, Weston-super-Mare
Amberol Trophy	Quedam, Yeovil
Serco Cup	Pembroke Estate Management Board Ltd
Inclusive Gardening Award	Lampard Community School, Barnstaple
Inclusive Gardening Award	Greenway Gardens, Tiverton
Inclusive Gardening Award	Red Brick Community Garden, Glastonbury
Inclusive Gardening Award	The Chocolate Quarter, Keynsham
Denise James Art In The Landscape Trophy	3rd Babbacombe Yarn Fairies
	2nd SouthGate, Bath
	Winner: Glastonbury in Bloom
Shaun Cregan Trophy	3rd The Ship, Portishead
	2nd Bicton Inn, Exmouth
	Winner: The Pony, Chew Valley
Gordon Ford Trophy, Best IYN	3rd Twigs Community Gardens, South Swindon
	2nd Redcatch Community Garden, Bristol
	Winner: Stanley's Garden , W-s-M
Plantscape Coastal Trophy	Torquay in Bloom
Alf Crouch Memorial Award	Terry Porter
Sponsors Trophy	Exmouth in Bloom
60th Anniversary Lifetime Award	Stan Hitt
60th Anniversary Special Award	Barnstaple In Bloom 'Friendship' Portfolio

Amberol's planter donation helps homeless organisation's wellbeing garden bloom.

Amberol is proud to have donated a parklet from our [Planter Enhancement Range](#) to the [Booth Centre](#) in Manchester, a community hub for people affected by homelessness. The donation took place in April 2024, shortly after the [RHS Urban Show in Manchester](#). Instead of reclaiming the dismantled planters, Amberol and several other exhibitors chose to give away their gardening products to local community groups.

The Booth Centre's community garden sits in an entirely paved outdoor space within the hub and is maintained by volunteers and members of their gardening group, which began in 2016. They have since used the parklet to provide additional seating and planters for their wellbeing garden - a sanctuary in the city centre for those they support.



An urban oasis

The Booth Centre's garden is a thriving example of the kind of ecosystems that can flourish even in the midst of a dense city.

Amberol recently caught up with Thom Jackson, Activities Coordinator of the Booth Centre, about the volunteer group's gardening journey and their experience of Amberol's parklets a few months down the line.

Thom says:

Our Amberol planters have provided a beautiful and tranquil place for people to relax in the Booth Centre's wellbeing garden.

The Centre works in partnership with those it serves, using their skills and experiences to shape positive change within the community.



Since Amberol's donation of the parklet, the gardening group have planted a range of summer bedding plants, soon to be winter bedding plants.

Community gardening is an opportunity to learn and connect with others. It is a core activity for those supported by the Booth Centre. [Find out how Amberol's products support community gardening groups.](#)

Thom explains how gardening brings the community of volunteers together:

On an average gardening session, we have 5-10 attendees, always different people, consisting of volunteers and centre visitors.

Amberol's long-lasting planters save time, water and money

When asked about the quality of Amberol's planters, Thom said:

"This is the first year we have had one of your planters. The self-watering feature has saved us time and water. We will be using the planters for a fair few years yet!"

How does the self-watering feature work?

Amberol's unique [Aquafeed™ self-watering system](#) contains a series of capillary action wicks that 'suck' water up from a reservoir onto a dispersal mat, which then distributes the water evenly across the compost, keeping it moist at all times.

Self-watering planters are a real asset to community gardening groups as they only need to be watered once or twice a week - saving time, water, and money.

Amberol's Planter Enhancement Range

Amberol's Planter Enhancement Range includes parklets that have been designed to create dedicated wellbeing and respite areas in public spaces and planter surrounds to improve aesthetics. They can also be used as part of traffic management schemes.





Amberol is honoured to have played a part in the growth of the Booth Centre’s wellbeing garden and is excited to see the lasting impact the parklet will have on its community.

Our autumn/winter photo competition opens for entries on 1st November 2024 and runs until 31st March 2025. Results will be announced in April 2025.

Entering is very easy; just submit your photos of Amberol’s self-watering planters with your wonderful displays via the [online form](#) on the Amberol website. Your photos will then be entered into the public vote taking place in October.

How can we help you?

If you would like to create amazing floral displays like the ones in our customer galleries, do contact us here at Amberol, we are always happy to help.

You could even arrange a personalised no-obligation virtual demo to see our products up close and personal. Call 01773 830 930 or email sales@amberol.co.uk for more information.



Please Note: The closing date for the Main Competition, IYN, IYS, Town Centre, Pennant and Commercial, Leisure & Tourism (Business) entries is: Saturday 1st March 2025

Britain In Bloom UK Nationals 2024



**Steve Fox, Yeovil in Bloom
Community Champion**



**BID: InExeter SILVER GILT
BID GROUP WINNER**



**Small Town: Glastonbury
GOLD**



**Large Village: Cannington
GOLD**



**Exceptional Public Engagement Arts
& Leisure Winner
GLASTONBURY**



**Town: Yeovil
SILVER GILT**

Business, Leisure, Tourism & Commercial Awards

NORTH SOMERSET

Portishead	Sarah Tynan Flowers	GOLD
Portishead	The Ship	GOLD
Portishead	The Posset Cup - Wetherspoons	SILVER
Portishead	Phoenix Bar	SILVER
Weston super Mare	Crematorium, Glendale Countryside	GOLD

WILTSHIRE

Tadpole Garden Village	Arkell's Strawberry Thief Pub	SILVER GILT
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BANES

Bath	Milsom Place	GOLD
Bath	The Inn at Freshford	GOLD
Bath	The Old Crown Inn	GOLD
Bath	Southgate	GOLD
Chew Magna	The Pony, Chew Valley	GOLD

DEVON

Babbacombe	Babbacombe Model Village	GOLD
Babbacombe	The Babbacombe Inn	GOLD
Babbacombe	Cary Arms & Spa	GOLD
Barnstaple	Brend Hotel Group, The Imperial Hotel	GOLD
Barnstaple	Brend Hotel Group, The Park Hotel	GOLD
Barnstaple	Golden Lion Tap	SILVER
Barnstaple	Tarka Leisure Centre	GOLD
Bovey Tracey	Brookside Restaurant	GOLD
Bovey Tracey	The Bell Inn	GOLD
Bovey Tracey	Cromwell Arms	GOLD
Bovey Tracey	Café 3 Sixty	SILVER GILT
Bovey Tracey	The Dolphin	SILVER
Buckfastleigh	Buckfast Abbey	GOLD
Torquay	Torre Abbey Gardens, Torbay Council	GOLD
Plymouth	Royal William Yard	GOLD
Exeter	University of Exeter Grounds Dept	GOLD
Brixham	Flour Flower	SILVER GILT
Poltimore	Lathys Farmshop	GOLD
Sidmouth	The Victoria Hotel	GOLD
Sidmouth	The Belmont Hotel	GOLD
Paignton	Paignton Zoo	GOLD
Dartmouth	The Dart Marina Hotel	SILVER GILT

CORNWALL

Hayle	Paradise Park	GOLD
Liskeard	The Flowers of Fore Street	SILVER
Liskeard	The Work Shed	SILVER GILT
Mitchell	The Plume of Feathers	GOLD
Newquay	Your Wellbeing Services Ltd	SILVER
Penzance	The North Inn, Pendeen	GOLD
Truro	Tregolis Manor Care Home	GOLD
St Buryan	St Buryan Inn	SILVER GILT
Mitchell	Mitchell Fruit Garden	SILVER GILT

SOMERSET

Glastonbury	Glastonbury Tribunal	SILVER GILT
Glastonbury	White Rabbit	GOLD
Glastonbury	Glastonbury Abbey	GOLD
Glastonbury	Knight's Fish & Chips Shop & Restaurant	SILVER
Glastonbury	Abbey Tea Rooms	SILVER
Glastonbury	Heart of the Tribe Gallery	GOLD
Glastonbury	Assembly Rooms & Glastonbury Galleries	GOLD
Glastonbury	St Margarets Chapel & Magnalene Almshouse	GOLD
Glastonbury	Rainbows End Café	SILVER GILT
Glastonbury	Stone Age	SILVER GILT
Glastonbury	The Crown Hotel	SILVER
Glastonbury	Beckets Inn	GOLD
Glastonbury	Cavendish Lodge	SILVER GILT
Yeovil	Quedam	GOLD
Cannington	Blackmore Farm	GOLD
Chard	Warner Leisure Homes, Cricket St Thomas	GOLD

Business, Leisure, Tourism & Commercial Award

We were pleased to see a continual interest entering our Business, Leisure and Commercial section with our highest recorded entry of 55 businesses, spread out across the region, with a tremendous response from Devon, Somerset & Cornwall.

Presentation of the awards took place in The Pavilion , Bath on the 8th October 2024, and we were pleased to see so many entrants there to collect their Awards.

The entry fee for 2025 will remain the same at £25, to help towards the continually rising costs of judging. We are really pleased to see the very high standard & enthusiasm across the businesses in the South West. Judges will again be looking at areas around entrances, public facilities, the standard of maintenance and general appearance, as well as interesting and original floral displays, general landscaping and general maintenance of grassed areas.

Further details can be found on our website. www.southwestinbloom.org.uk



Commercial, Leisure & Tourism Business Entry Fee £30
Closing Date: Saturday 1st March. Judging June to August 2025



Barrington In Bloom

We're not quite sure how it came about, but during the summer of 2023 a small group of residents of Barrington found themselves forming a committee and entering our village into South West In Bloom! We are a small village with around 450 residents, a village hall, a pub/restaurant, a village church and a National Trust property. We have very few shared community spaces but we've got good bones as they say!



Many of the houses are made of locally quarried stone, with plenty of thatched roofs, originally made from the reeds of the Somerset levels, visible from parts of the village. We are lucky to live in such a pretty village with some beautiful gardens.

Following a period of consultation with the village community, asking for their ideas about what they'd like us to do, we balanced their ideas against what we felt was achievable and sustainable and began to form a plan. We made sure we talked to our parish council, our very popular gardening club and the National Trust.

Gaining permissions, agreements and 'buy in' was important to us. It was also great to welcome Terry on a visit to the village, meeting residents and offering us advice, support and encouragement.

We also knew we'd need to create some funds. The Parish Council gave us a grant and various fund-raising events were well supported by villagers. They included us cooking Sunday roast for 60 people in the village hall, Christmas bingo and our grand finale: an Elvis tribute night!

We wanted to showcase what the village already did well, but also to encourage greater community participation, a good starting point for year 1 and as we looked at what additional things could realistically be achieved





From promoting the church yard ‘tidy ups’ (increasing volunteers from around 6 to over 40!) to creating a children’s veg growing category in the Gardening Club’s annual show and appointing a new footpath warden, following a 3 year hiatus, or giving a bit of TLC to street furniture ourselves and getting the parish council to refurbish our grade I listed red telephone box.

We can’t believe how much we’ve achieved over our first year and how amazing everyone who has got involved has been. Anything is possible with either a well stocked bar (fund raising events only!) or endless supplies of tea and cake!

Being able to come home from the awards ceremony in Bath to proudly inform the village that our small community had won gold and a trophy for the best newcomers, was just amazing! We displayed our certificates and trophy at the monthly coffee morning in the village hall and people were very keen to know about plans for next year.



Everyone is really proud of what the village has achieved. One villager summed it up really well “*The village is looking lovely, it’s been really great to see so many people being involved and the changes that have been made.*”





The Barrington Boar

The Barrington Boar is an award winning restaurant in the village of Barrington, in the cider making countryside of South Somerset. The team, led by Chef Alistair Clifford and Victoria Collins have recently purchased the farm next to the restaurant.

They have plans to create a market garden to supply the Barrington Boar Kitchen, developing a Slow Food UK allotment and apple orchard to grow forgotten local plants and trees, and to provide a community plot for local groups to use for garden therapy sessions.



To fund this project they have launched a crowd funding campaign. They are also hosting a wide number of fundraising events. They hope to transform the overgrown farmland into a functional, beautiful and inviting space that will benefit customers, the local community and the ecosystem.

Barrington is surrounded by beautiful gardens and keen community gardeners, including the accomplished Barrington in Bloom Group. They will be offering these as well as local horticultural groups and schools their space and facilities to use and enjoy.

Slow Food UK is a non profit organisation that aims to promote a better way of eating. They celebrate the diverse and rich food traditions of the UK and work to protect our edible diversity. The organisation engages with the public, food producers, chefs, businesses and academics.

The Slow Food Allotment and the Market Garden will include varieties of produce that are at imminent or potential risk of extinction.

Based here in the UK we have over 150 years manufacturing experience.



Here at geViews we are a specialist British Manufacturer of High Quality, Hardwearing, Low Maintenance Planters and Street Furniture. We combine great looks, with meticulous attention to detail and the best possible build quality.

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Speakers at the Spring Seminar 2025

Mark Wasilewski LVO

Manager of St James's Park & The Green Park

Having embarked on a horticultural career in 1978 working for the Somerset Health Authority, Mark joined The Royal Parks in 1989 as propagator and nursery manager at Greenwich Park, before working at The Regent's Park and subsequently becoming park manager of St James's Park and The Green Park in 2002.

His position sees him looking after one of Europe's busiest parks attracting some 17 million visitors per year. St James's Park is known for its displays of spring bulbs, floriferous borders, and intricate summer bedding schemes. The lake is home to many species of waterfowl and has been a home to pelicans since 1664. His responsibilities also include management of The Mall and Horse Guards Parade, both scenes of annual ceremonial events such as State Visits and Trooping the Colour, and a major element of his role is in event planning.

The Mall hosts the finish of the London Marathon, and the park has been the venue for Tour de France and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which saw the Beach Volleyball stadium located on Horse Guards Parade. Half a million people are estimated to have visited St James's Park on the day of the wedding of Prince William to Kate Middleton in 2011, and in excess of a million visitors took part in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in 2012. In 2022 the Park played a major role in the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and later in the year the public funeral arrangements of Queen Elizabeth II, and the King's Coronation Procession in 2023.

Mark is a former Trustee of London in Bloom and has served on the RHS Britain in Bloom national judging panel between 2004 and 2018, and again in 2024. Mark judges several London-based competitions and is a member of the Guild of Horticultural Judges.

He served on the RHS Herbaceous Plant Committee between 2015-2020, and is a member of the RHS Floral Judging Panel which sees him judging, among others, shows such as Chelsea and Hampton Court.

Appointed a Member of The Royal Victorian Order in 2013 for his services to The Royal Parks for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, he was invested as a Lieutenant of the Order in 2023 for his services to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Mark was granted the Freedom of the City of London in September 2024



Spring Seminar 2025
Thursday 27th March
RHS ROSEMOOR
10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Provisional Programme

- 10:00 Coffee, Welcome & Introductions
- 10:15 **BIDS & Bloom - A BID - ter understanding**
Jon Walton, CEO Plymouth Waterfront Partnership
- 11.00 Comfort Break
- 11.15 Plants, Pelicans & Palaces **Mark Wasilewski**
- 12:15 **Opportunity to explore RHS Rosemoor Gardens**
- 13.00 Buffet Lunch
- 14.00 **Organising Your Bloom Entry** **Jon Wheatley + Judges**
- 14.45 **Planning Your judging Tour** **Jon Wheatley + Judges**
- 15.15 Comfort Break
- 15.30 **2024 Pride in Parks Awards**
- 16.00 Question Time
- 16.30 Closing Remarks

Cost £25.00 per delegate

Closing date for receipt of booking form, (form available to download from website) and payment: Saturday 1st March 2025



Website: www.southwestinbloom.org.uk

Speaker at the Spring Seminar 2025



**Jon Walton CEO
Plymouth Waterfront Partnership
Business Improvement District**

BIDS & Bloom - A BID-ter understanding.

Jon will share an insight into the world of BID's, their challenges, how they benefit the local economy and help build great partnerships, play a major part in driving investment, and are essential in creating places where people want to live, work and play!

RHS South West in Bloom Pride in Park Awards

We are again pleased with the response for the 2024 Pride in Parks Awards. The parks judging is from June and will finish at the end of the year. This allows the parks to decide on the best time of the year they prefer to be judged. As in previous years, the Presentation for the 2024 Parks Awards will be held during the Spring Seminar, next year to be held at Rosemoor on the 27th March. Pride in Parks 2025 entry forms will be sent with the Spring Newsletter, with the closing date for receipt of entries being set for **Monday 9th June 2025**.



John Coles Park, Chippenham



Rodmoor Gardens, Portishead

2025 Children's Painting Competition

The RHS have a target of becoming Biodiversity Positive for 2025, as part of their RHS Sustainability Strategy so we are delighted to announce our theme for next year's South West In Bloom Children's Painting Competition is:



'Blooming Biodiversity In My Community'



Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area. A variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, like an intricate web, to maintain balance and support life. We would like paintings to reflect examples of biodiversity found in your own blooming community, school garden, beach, park, or any other community gardening projects local to you!

The age group categories are: Up to 6 years, 7–11 years, and 12–16 years old. Art should be a maximum of A3 in size, and only one entry per age group, per School/Bloom Group can enter, and they should be the winners of your own local competition. **Entry forms and further details will be available in our Spring 2025 Newsletter. Closing date for entries: 1st July 2025.**

2025 It's Your Neighbourhood (IYN) & It's Your School (IYS)

Following the RHS' decision to no longer support 'In Bloom' assessing schools as part of their It's Your Neighbourhood initiative, the strength of feeling expressed by many of our region's Bloom and Community Groups is, if possible, to still give schools the opportunity to enter and be assessed against the IYN criteria.

Recognising the valuable contribution and the important role schools play in their local community, together with the shared belief that visiting schools, engaging in person, and igniting a passion in horticulture and environment in the young, is a key element in securing a successful future of 'In Bloom', South West In Bloom are pleased to confirm we will run our own 'It's Your School' category in 2025.

We therefore encourage all school's wishing to take part to please do so! From a school's entrants perspective, the assessment process and level of awards will remain exactly the same as in previous years entering as an IYN. It is just the title category and design of the certificate that has changed; however, it is important to note our 2025 school's entry data, we will no longer be able to register with the RHS. Schools wishing to register with the RHS, are asked to do so through their RHS campaign for School Gardening Scheme, where further details can be found at: <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/school-gardening-awards>.

2024 CPRE Environmental Award



The
countryside
charity

First I would like to congratulate RHS Southwest in Bloom for reaching its 60th Anniversary, and I would like to thank our hosts of Bath for the awards day at the Bath Pavilion.

On behalf of the CPRE Southwest Group of Counties, this is the second year we have sponsored the Southwest Environmental award, and the results are as follows - in joint third - **Ash Rescue Wildflower Meadows Dartmouth**, and **Conigre Mead Nature Reserve Melksham**. In second - **Sidmouth, The Friends of the Byes** and we are delighted to be able to award first place to **Exmouth's Tiny Forest**. For any group of volunteers, very often one of the biggest challenges is finding a location for a project.



This Tiny Forest was a clear winner by all the chairs of the CPRE Counties 25 native trees, local involvement including schools, the deaf academy, with the youngest helper just 4 years old even a small spade was provided to assist, and each of the children were given Forest Story books to take home when they had finished.

Winner, Tiny Forest, Exmouth

The Forest is looked after by a team of tree keepers from all ages.

These volunteers, many from the immediate neighbourhood, undertake walking by and checking all is well, litter picking if necessary, watering as part of a work party, keeping grass away from the saplings, applying mulch and talking about the project to passers-by.

They collect all the water required for caring for the saplings from the nearby Exmouth football club grandstand roof which produces up to 2000 litres of water a month.

Not just a truly sustainable project, but one that is inclusive of all people and ages from the community.

So, on behalf of CPRE Southwest, congratulations to the volunteers who created Exmouth's Tiny Forest.

Hugh Williams Chair CFPRE Somerset

CPRE Environmental Award



Winner, Tiny Forest, Exmouth



Runner Up, Sidmouth, Friend of the Byses



Joint 3rd Ash Rescue wildlife Meadow, Dartmouth



Join 3rd Conigre Nature Reserve, Melksham

Tom Hart Dyke



**To Celebrate the 60th Year Anniversary we awarded
9 Community Champion Awards at our Presentation**



Sandie Morgan Hayle in Bloom



Ann Leake, Sidmouth in Bloom



Lucy Bush, Writhlington Allotments



John & Jennie Edwards, Poltimore



David Skidmore, Weston-super-Mare



Alan Holland, South Swindon

Community Champion Awards



Jean Owen & Fran Sparrow, Thornbury in Bloom

Chairman's Report

2024 has been a very successful, as well as eventful year with RHS South West in Bloom.

Our thanks go to all the volunteers within your communities for their dedication, enthusiasm, interest and hard work and to our Committee, and Judges both regionally and nationally. You are all brilliant and I am proud to represent you all.

Coupled with these thanks are the RHS, who, in challenging times, continue to support the largest community gardening programme in the UK, perhaps even the World. We are indebted to Kay Clarke and welcome Sarah Galvin to her new RHS post.

Our programme for 2025 looks promising with planned events at both RHS Rosemoor and Torbay.

Thank you all sincerely

Jon Wheatley

Please Note Closing Date for the Main Competition, IYN, IYS, Town Centre, BID, Pennant & Commercial, Leisure & Tourism entries is Saturday 1st March 2025



2024 It's Your Neighbourhood Awards



Gordon Ford Trophy, Best IYN
Winner Stanleys Garden. W-s-M



Gordon Ford Trophy, Runner Up
Redcatch Community Garden



Gordon Ford Trophy, Third Place
.Twigs community Garden



Portishead Youth Centre
Outstanding



Exmouth, Over the Garden Fence
Outstanding



Barnstaple Railway Station
Outstanding

2024 It's Your Neighbourhood Awards



Wellington Basins
Outstanding



Barnstaple, Floral Art Club
Outstanding



Babbacombe Downs Buglife Bed
Outstanding



Dartmouth Foss Slip Garden
Outstanding



Newquay, Fistral Beach Clean,
Outstanding



Tiverton Blundell School
Outstanding

A Note from your President

Early on when Bloom first started the Presentation was held in a field overlooking a quarry, it was Tim Smit's idea to build a biodome and the Eden Project was born, where now thousands of people from all over the world visit.

Onto this year's Presentation, on my own patch Minehead won Gold, and my own Vic Verrier Trophy for best new entry, congratulations to Barrington in Bloom. Barry Cruse Award for best Website awarded to Portishead in Bloom, then two late members cups, Denise James Award for Art in the Landscape, to Glastonbury, and the Shaun Cregan for best Floral Public House, The Pony, Chew Valley.

It was the 60th anniversary of Britain in Bloom, a very special occasion and milestone too in the South West, as we celebrated Stan Hitt's 60 years with Bloom. He was head of parks in Bath many years ago, and now over 90 years of age. I'm always very grateful for our Patron Lady Emma Fellowes, from the very first time she became Patron she has never let us down in presenting the awards, it remains the highlight for our entrants to receive their awards from her.

Next I must mention our Chairman. Jon Wheatley, he is rarely home in the summer judging at shows and at the same time promoting Bloom.

What would we do without Terry Porter, our Treasurer and Judge, he puts together the whole package for any event using his knowledge, so thanks again Terry. Also supporting Terry is our Secretary Melissa, who often works unsociable hours.

Due to my mobility problem, I can't speak personally about any events as I wasn't there, but I understand one of the highlights of this year's Presentation was my dear friend Jim Buttress who worked for the Royal Parks in London. He has made many television programmes, including one with Tom Hart Dyke, who was also a guest speaker, who while collecting orchids in Panama and Columbia was caught by guerillas but released and is making his World Garden with Jim's help, which is now open to the public.

If it's not too early, I would like to wish you a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Vic Verrier MBE President South West in Bloom

**South West in Bloom
Winners of the Children's Painting Competition 2024**

This year's entries were fantastic, excellent drawings all round.

The theme this year was

“60 Years of Bloom - Celebrations and Friendship“

Our thanks go to Lady Emma Fellowes for judging this year's competition.

**Children's Picture Competition
Up to 6 years Old**

Ayra Richards Age 5
St Just Primary School
Winner



Lennox Docherty Age 6
St Nicholas Primary School
Radstock
2nd Place



Georgina Lewis Age 6
Badbury Park Primary
School, Swindon
3rd Place

Children's Picture Competition
7 to 11 years Old



Paige Benmore Age 10
Paulton Primary School
Paulton Village
Winner

Minuksha Liyomi
Wijehunga Age 9
St Nicholas Primary School
Radstock
2nd Place



Rania Moghal Age 7
Forest & Sandridge Primary
School, Melksham
3rd Place



Phoebe Ireland Age 11
4th Withycombe Brownies
Exmouth
Highly Commended



Children's Picture Competition
12 to 15 years Old



Chloe Cook Age 12
Cape Cornwall School,
St Just, Cornwall
Winner

Jamie-Le Conton Age 14
Hayle Academy,
2nd Place



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your own socials too!

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2025

Regional Main Judging **1st July to 31st July 2025**
IYN & IYS Assessments **1st July to 31st July 2025**
Pride In Park Judging **June to December 2025**
Business Judging **June to August 2025**
Spring Seminar **Thursday 27th March 2025 at RHS Rosemoor**
Awards Presentation **October in Torquay. Details TBC**

PLEASE NOTE NEW SOUTH WEST IN BLOOM EMAIL CONTACT TO USE WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT:

southwestinbloom1@outlook.com

SWIB will monitor our previous aol email account for the remainder of this year, but please update your email contact details for SWIB as above.

Regional Coordinator: Melissa
6 Main Road, Hutton,
Weston-super-Mare,
North Somerset. BS24 9QG
Email:
southwestinbloom1@outlook.com
Tel: 07875 849809

Editor: Terry
15a Moorcroft Road,
Hutton, Weston-super-Mare,
North Somerset. BS24 9RW
Email:
taporter11@aol.com
Tel: 07989 855339

Website: www.southwestinbloom.org.uk