



SOUTH WEST



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SOUTH WEST

Britain in Bloom - South West Spring Newsletter 2018



Important Dates for 2018

Regional Judging	Wed 4th July to Wed 18th July
IYN Assessments	Mon 2nd July to Monday 30th July
National Judging	Mon 30th July to Friday 10th Aug
Pride in Park Award judging	June 2018 to December 2018
Presentation Westlands Yeovil	Thursday 4th October



Our South West in Bloom Facebook Page is also a great way for groups to showcase the work they have been doing- if your group has a facebook page, we would love for you to join ours.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/South-West-In-Bloom/193263914018665>

Web Site www.southwestinbloom.org.uk

We held one of our most successful spring Seminars at the Imperial Hotel, Torquay in March. More details inside.



Chairman's Report

Welcome to Bloom 2018 ,by now many of you are well into the planning planting and improvements to your respective Communities. Many exciting and creative initiatives are planned by the groups here in South West in Bloom many aimed at promoting the South West as a place to enjoy living in and visiting.

We have been very fortunate in achieving a bumper National entry with for the first time ever with two Communities selected for the Champion of Champions at National Level. Congratulations to Sidmouth and Truro

Many Community projects are planned including the Creation of a Community Garden at Hampton Court Flower Show for the RHS as well as in our Towns Cities and Villages.

Judges Assessors and Mentors are all briefed to support advise and Coach where invited and we have revisited training initiatives as well as how best to help groups within the Region.

Happy Healthy Horticulture with an emphasis on growing our own food is the main theme and objective for Bloom coupled with the outcomes such initiatives can have particularly where Children and Young Persons are involved. If you need any advice at all contact Denise James our Secretary / coordinator.

Have a good season and enjoy yourselves in promoting and participating in Britain in Bloom with the Royal Horticultural Society and South West in Bloom.

Jon Wheatley and The South West in Bloom Team

Britain in Bloom set to air on BBC2

A brand new TV series presented by Chris Bavin on BBC will put Britain in Bloom firmly on the national agenda!

It follows 15 communities taking part in the UK's favourite gardening competition, capturing the power of Bloom and community gardening to change lives and places for the better.

Presentation Day at Westlands, Yeovil on Thursday 4th October 2018

This year the presentation event will be held in Westlands Yeovil . This is a splendid venue, and recently refurbished as a conference centre.

It is a large venue, and the seating will be by table, and not theatre style. When you have selected a place, this will be yours for the whole day, including the lunch.

Provisional ITINERARY FOR THE DAY

9.00 am	Registration
10.00 am	Welcome
10.15 am	Neighbourhood Awards
12.30 pm	Lunch
2.30 pm	South West in Bloom Awards
4.00 pm	Closing
4.15 pm	Judges surgeries for main Competition entries



The day is being hosted by Yeovil in Bloom.

Lady Emma Fellows will be at the presentation, and we hope that Lord Fellows will also be able to attend, it depends very much on his Diary commitments.

We have kept the cost of the day at £18, and Booking forms are enclosed with this newsletter.

The Last Date for Booking is Friday 7th September



Don't forget you will also be able to book on-line on our web site from August 2018. Keep a watch on the web site.

Regional Judging Wed 4th July to Wed 18th July

IYN Assessments Mon 2nd July to Monday 30th July

Presidents Message

With the thought of another cold snap, it does not give anyone too much enthusiasm to think about much gardening outdoors. But to ensure you have a good entry, there is always work to be done. When planning it's always good to thumb through the latest seed catalogue to see something special that may catch the judge's eye. Chelsea often see's a trend in plants and colours each year, the experts told us last year would see increased numbers of Zinnia's in our gardens, this year many report, on new Calendula's (pot marigolds) and dwarf Sunflowers, we will wait and see. Also don't forget some fancy veg.

With worldwide press now highlighting the vast amounts of waste plastic polluting our oceans' and beaches, trying to get supermarkets to reduce packaging etc. What about Horticulture let us know of any initiatives your groups may be trying this year. When serving my own apprenticeship, winters in the potting shed often evolved around nailing together wooden seed trays, and washing clay pots on a frosty day. Plastic pots and boxes had not been invented. Buy good quality products that will last with care and at the end of its life recycle responsibly.

Discretionary awards were discussed at one of our recent meetings, please make sure if you think you have any worthy entries in the various sections to point them out to your judge on the day. The secretary has received very positive feedback with reference to the Spring seminar held recently in Torquay. We need to know this so please don't hesitate to contact us with any ideas you may have, or topics you would like covered at future Seminars, we are here to listen. Congratulations to all the Pride in Parks winners please display prominently it indicates to visitors in the South West the high standards you have achieved for your park.

Through all the excellent work you do, and the pleasure it gives the group's can I personally ask you all to spread the word to neighbouring towns or villages. The benefits you feel you get from it, increasing the community spirit and the feeling of pride. There are some fantastic places out there, let's see if we can increase our entries.

Finally have a good summer, enjoy your judging day in whatever category you enter.

Hope to see you all on Thursday 4th October at the Westland's Yeovil.

Glendale

Horticulture

Vic Verrier MBE
Hon President
RHS South West in Bloom

Green Plan It- exploring the purpose and power of plants

It's already that time again when we start to plan for our yearly design challenge for young people, Green Plan It!

Each year across England and Scotland we recruit and train volunteer mentors from the horticulture industry to support teams of secondary school students to design a green space in their school or local community, during a 10 week period. The Green Plan It Challenge is designed to be student led, allowing young people to explore community needs and environmental issues as well as the role of plants in our lives. The premise of the project originally derived in response to a report written by the RHS in 2013 called 'Horticulture Matters', which looked at the present situation of the horticulture industry and found that the lack of young people entering horticulture as a profession was due to the poor perception of horticulture in schools and colleges. So as part of Green Plan It we also aim to look at the breadth and diversity of jobs available in the Industry. Horticulture offers a wide range of exciting careers from plant science and garden design, to photography and journalism and we want young people to see how exciting and inspiring horticulture is.



We are currently looking to recruit mentors, who could donate three to five days of their time between September and December 2018. If you have professional horticultural design experience and would be able to support schools in the South Gloucestershire and North Somerset areas we would love to hear from you.

Being a mentor is an opportunity to inspire the next generation through the power of plants and to challenge young people's perception of horticulture. In 2016 over 100 mentors took part. 92% felt the project was relevant to the needs of the horticulture industry and 78% felt that the project was relevant to their own professional development.

If you would like to more information on becoming a mentor, have a look at the RHS Campaign for School Gardening website, <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/11-19-years/Green-Plan-It/Mentors>

If you would like to register your interest in Green Plan It 2018 you can also email greenplanit@rhs.org.uk, providing your location, brief details of your skills/experience and contact details.

Thank you for your support.

"Horticulture contributes £9 billion to the UK economy every year, and employs around 300,000 people across a variety of disciplines. However, 70% of businesses say that they struggle to find the skilled workers they require and 83% put this down to the poor perception of horticulture in schools and colleges"

GLENDALE

The Leyland cypress also known as the *Cupressus x leylandii*, or simply *leylandii*, is a fast-growing coniferous tree with spray-like citrus scented foliage. *Leylandii* are incredibly dense, making them a wonderful coniferous feature as a tree or hedge.



The genus was born in the late 1800's at a country estate in Powys, Wales. Two plants which would naturally grow hundreds of miles apart, a Monterey cypress and a Nootka cypress cross-fertilised and produced six seedlings of the new plant. Today over 100 years later, an estimated 55 million of the plants are growing in the UK.

Leylandii are best grown in sun or light shade and well-drained soil. Due to their vast size, *leylandii* take a lot of moisture and nutrients from the soil which should be compensated for by adding leaf mould, compost or rotted manure during autumn and spring. They also require a significant amount of water in particularly dry weather. Plants nearby to a large *leylandii* will have to contend for light and moisture so must be selected carefully. *Euphorbia amygdaloides* var *robbiae* and *Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost' are great varieties which thrive where the sun doesn't necessarily shine.

Known for their rapid growth and sheer size, the *leylandii* can easily grow to a height of 12 metres or more in as little as 10 years. The plants are great for creating privacy and blocking out wind and road noise. *Leylandii* benefit from regular clipping of their dense foliage throughout summer and autumn to maintain a suitable and attractive shape and size.

When not kept to a maintainable height, the *leylandii* can grow out of control and become somewhat more difficult and expensive to prune. *Leylandii* have had some bad press in recent years with excessive and uncontrolled growth of trees and hedges causing conflict between neighbours whose homes and gardens are blocked from any natural light. As a result of these conflicts, legislation governing high hedges now gives those whose properties are overshadowed the opportunity to resolve conflicts with the help of their local council without involving lawyers.

Whether you love it or loathe it, the *leylandii* has its roots firmly set in the gardens of the Great British public, with over 300,000 of the plant being sold each year. So if you're looking for good height on a low budget and are prepared to put in some pruning time, *leylandii* is a superb option!



Pennant Entries

Northern Area Town

Taunton in Bloom
Burnham on Sea
Royal Wootton Bassett
Gillingham

Judges Graham Price, Val Davies

Bids

Tavistock
St Austell
Bath
Weston super Mare

**Judges Tony Moore
Alex Botherton**

Southern Area Town

St David's, Exeter
Wonford
Crediton in Bloom
Bovey Tracey
Totnes Gardens
Buckfastleigh & Buckfast

Judges Steve Clampin Paul Collier

Village

Berrynarbor in Bloom
Temple Cloud in Bloom
Tressilion
Plympton St Maurice

Judges Rod Pooley, Lesley Jellyman

Go Wild for Worms in 2018!

The RHS and Wildlife Trusts joint campaign Wild About Gardens has urged people to go batty for bats, get creative for hedgehogs and to get buzzing for wild bees.



This year it's asking you to 'Go Wild for Worms'. A true gardener's friend, worms are a sign of soil health and help your plants to thrive, as well as being food for a huge range of wildlife. Dig into their free online resources and take action for all wildlife.

www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk

COMPETITION ENTRIES 2018

Champion of Champions (J Wheatley) + Guest Judges

Torquay	Large Town
Portishead	Town
Truro	Town
Hayle	Small town
Sidmouth	Town
Kingsbridge	Small town
Sodbury	Small Town
Clovelly	Village

South West Tourism Cup Over 80,000 (Kim Parish, Ian Murphy) Exeter

Tesco Cup 35,000 -79,999 (Richard Budge, John Yoe)
Paignton Bath Weston super Mare in Bloom

St Bridget Cup 19,000 -34,999 (Christine Fraser, Derek Beer)
Yeovil in Bloom Exmouth

Portman Cup 12,000 - 18,999 (Jane Pagano, Michael Foy)

Calne in Bloom	Devizes & Ridgeway
Keynsham in Bloom	Tiverton in Bloom
Falmouth	Melksham
Brixham	Newquay
Babbacombe in Bloom	

Sargent Cup 9,000 - 11,999 (Kim Parish, Ian Murphy)
Thornbury

Preece Cup 7,000 - 8,999 (Martyn Davies, Andy Cole)
Glastonbury in Bloom Ilfracombe Bradford on Avon

SWTA Cup 5,500 - 6,999 (Martyn Abrahams, Sue Maddocks)
Marlborough Great Torrington Seaton

Ayre Cup 2,500 - 5,499 (Josephine Spring, Richard Beale)
St Just Radstock

Cox Cup 1,500 - 2,499 (Tom Sharples, Richard Taylor)
Milborne Port Curry Rival
Hutton Templecombe in Bloom

Mary Mortimer Under 1,500 (Tim Ely, Bob Sweet)

St Issey	Ash Martock	
Langport	Haselbury Plunknett	Beer

Please note, the Allocation of judges is at this time provisional

GLENDALE

Geraniums are one of Britain's most popular perennials and it's easy to see why. They are tough, easy to grow and look great in beds, borders, and containers. Hardy geraniums, sometimes known as Cranesbill geraniums, are a real feel-good plant as it's hard not to be successful with them. You can take advantage of the fact that they are happiest when grown in sunny areas and don't like to be overwatered. They are extremely hardy and can tolerate temperatures up to -20°, so can survive even the harshest of British winters.



Their colours range from the violet-lue 'Brookside', to the striking magenta of the 'Pink Penny', to the delicately veined renardii. With hundreds of varieties to choose from, there is a geranium for everyone!

The foliage of many varieties of geranium is highly attractive in its own right. Many varieties produce low growing, carpet-like foliage, making them ideal as ground cover. Flowers are generally quite small but are produced in huge abundance and will almost cover the whole plant when in full bloom.

Flowering times vary between varieties. Some will flower for only a few weeks in spring, with others such as 'Rozanne' flowering from early summer through to autumn. Hardy geraniums are extremely useful for filling gaps in beds and borders when spring blossoms have finished and summer flowers have yet to open.

Well established hardy geraniums will grow larger over time so can be lifted and divided in spring or autumn. Cut or 'divide' sections from the parent plant making sure you take some root with it, and simply plant in the ground or a container. The parent plant won't be damaged and you can continue dividing every year or two.

Geraniums are extremely pest resistant. They won't be munched on by rabbits, deer, slugs and snails but are adored by bees. With all of these wonderful attributes, there's no good reason why you shouldn't grow your geraniums in abundance!



Glendale

Horticulture

Contact Glendale Horticulture on 01452
740216 or visit
www.glendale-horticulture.co.uk
for more information.

Leisure, Tourism & Commercial Award

Entries were again good in the 2017 Leisure, Tourism & Business awards. The awards were presented at the awards ceremony at the Imperial Hotel, Torquay on 5th October. Entries again came from all over the region participated and really pulled out the stops to again raise the quality of premises and visitor experience. The entry fee is again £20 per entry to help cover assessment and feedback costs. This environmental benchmarking award has much to commend itself for as a measure of quality.

Judges will be looking at areas around entrances, public facilities, signage, standard of maintenance and general appearance. As well as interesting and original floral displays, general landscaping and general maintenance of grassed areas.



Plymouth Royal William Yard **GOLD**



Burnham on Sea Salt Express Ltd **GOLD**

They will also be looking at the environmental side of the business and community involvement. The awards take on the traditional format of Gold, Silver Gilt, Silver and Bronze

RHS South West in Bloom 2018 Schools Painting Competition

The theme for this year is

“It’s a Bugs Life”

The age groups are as follows:

Up to 6 years old, 7 – 11 years old, 12 – 16 years old

Art should be a maximum of A3 in size. On the back of each painting, put names, age, and name of school and name of city, town or village.

Only one entry per age group, and they should be the winners of your local competition. Please note submitted works are non-returnable!

The best exhibit in each age category should be sent to:

**Richard Budge, Truro City Council,
Municipal Building, Boscawen Street,
Truro, Cornwall, TR1 2NE**

Entry Forms are enclosed

Closing date for entries is Friday 20th July

It has become a platform for a variety of outdoor activities which has brought people of all ages and abilities together in a way which few if any other initiatives can. But the impact on our urban Neighbourhoods which are now greener and cleaner can't be under-estimated. Of course there is more to be done. But it is worth taking time out to look back a see how far communities have come and celebrating that success.



Pinces Gardens, Exeter
– The Wisteria Arch

Launch of new 'Green Dog Walkers' scheme

Villagers have signed up to a national community-led scheme which aims to help tackle dog fouling and bring irresponsible dog owners to heel. Wimblington Parish Council launched the Green Dog Walkers scheme.

The scheme was first piloted by a Scottish council ten years ago, and has proved hugely successful in reducing issues around dog fouling across the UK, including the Malvern Hills and Northumberland.



Dog owners who pledge to become a Green Dog Walker show they are responsible for cleaning up after their pets by displaying a green ribbon. The ribbon also lets other owners know that they carry spare bags and are happy to supply one if they're 'caught short'.

Friendly and non-confrontational, the scheme aims to create a talking point among dog walkers and green ribbon wearers act as good example to other dog owners who may be less responsible.

URBAN 'GREEN' WARRIORS!

The City of Exeter has a growing number of 'Bloom' groups doing some quite remarkable things, from planting a 4 mile 'Linear Orchard' along the River Exe linking dispersed Neighbourhoods, to a specially commissioned play to be performed in a Pines Gardens in May to celebrate the first of Exeter's notable nurseries founded on the site by William Lucombe in 1720. (The most famous introduction was the Lucombe Oak and the nursery became Lucombe, Pince & Co in the 1820's.

Exeter groups' Britain in Bloom awards in October were delighted when their certificates were presented at their local event by Toby Buckland.

Toby is a born-and-bred Exeter horticulturalist who, apart from his many TV and major Flower Show appearances, now has a three-hour BBC Radio Devon programme every Sunday.



Toby is a great communicator and teacher: each April 'Toby's Garden Festival' at Powderham Castle, nr Exeter, is a major calendar event for horticulturalist from Devon and beyond. Exeter 'Bloomers' are part of the volunteer team working with Toby and his wife Lisa over the two days and seeing the superb plants on sale by some of the very best small/medium nurseries in the region and listening to the best speakers makes

this yet another learning experience for enthusiastic volunteers and is a wonderful way to network and grow new friends.

Exeter had been out of RHS Britain in Bloom for about 25 years until two SW in Bloom committee members visited one of the urban Neighbourhoods, St David's, in 2013 and encouraged them to dip a toe into the water.

What happened next was amazing. By 2016 there were 28 'It's Your Neighbourhood' groups, 4 city 'village' pennant entries, and the main City entry was in the national finals.

Bloom has become a catalyst for 'community engagement'.

RHS South West in Bloom 2018 Schools Painting Competition

As with other 'bloom' towns, in Kingsbridge we are always seeking to get more people on board to work with us and we are particularly keen on encouraging the younger generation.



Up to 6 yrs Old.
Samo age 5
Loddiswell Primary,
Kingsbridge

Last year we extended our invitation to join the Schools Painting Competition to more remote schools within our catchment who would not normally have the opportunity to participate. We were absolutely delighted to have had two winners in 2017 and the schools were keen to try again this year.

This is a great opportunity to make contact with both the staff and parents at schools and keep the profile of the 'bloom' group to a high level through media coverage.

We recognise that now days staff are somewhat stretched to deliver the curriculum so we encourage them by organising /administering the competition for them with an entry form which contains the rules etc. as defined by SWIB.

The entries are then collated and judged by representatives from our local art gallery and our 'bloom' group with the best being submitted to Richard Budge our Vice Chairman at SWIB.

All of the entries are then put on display in the Town Library and it gives Kingsbridge in Bloom team the opportunity to engage with everyone involved.

It has proved to be a real hit and well received by our community.

The theme this year 'It's a Bugs Life' is well worth the effort. Participating has proved very worthwhile for us.

Graham Price

7 to 11 years Old
Paige Hosking Age 9
Kingsbridge Primary School



A Bible Garden in the Heart of Sidmouth

Sidmouth's volunteer groups work together to help create 'The Lost Gardens of Elysian Fields' a Bible Garden in the Heart of Sidmouth.



Sidholme Hotel, owned by the Methodist Guild, is set in a beautiful tree'd landscape and is only a five minute stroll to the heart of Sidmouth's retail area. John McGregor has been instrumental in raising money to restore the wonderful organ and large chandelier in the music room where concerts are now performed, but the garden needed rejuvenation. John approached a few people with the idea of creating a Bible Garden.

A small committee was formed from existing members of other volunteer groups in Sidmouth: Aileen and Nigel Hyman from the Sid Vale Association (SVA), Jill Gray and Jon Ball from the Sidmouth Arboretum (SA), Lynette Talbot and Peter Endersby from Sidmouth in Bloom (SIB) and Sameer Velayudhan, the manager of Sidholme.

Aileen was voted Chairperson of the project: 'The Lost Gardens of Elysian Fields'. Nigel, who had written a book about the history of the Hotel, was to continue research and give talks, Jill was to check on tree identification and trail around the property, and Lynette was to select plants, design a labyrinth and Bible Garden, and review the planting of the grotto and Victorian beds.

Sameer was keen to organised 'Guild gardening holidays' where people would stay at the hotel but volunteer to help restore the gardens under guidance, with evening talks by Nigel and Lynette, and Steve Byrne was to act as host. Trips to Bicton Park and the town were planned. As there was an abundance of onion weed throughout the property which had to be eradicated, it was decided that the volunteers would start on the garden around the 'grotto' waterfall.



By Christmas, a working holiday in March 2018 was planned by Sameer and bookings taken.

Ageratum F1 Blue Horizon – not your usual bedding Ageratum, but a tall type for the middle of a border. Reaching a height of 45cms. 18", these are bushy plants which flower throughout the summer.



Marigold Zenith

Calendula Kinglet Mix – a brand new introduction producing 'anemone' like crested flowers in all the popular calendula colours. Ht. 45cms (18")
Impatiens (Busy Lizzie) Tumbler Trailing Mix – at last a trailing Impatiens for hanging baskets and tubs. Quick to grow and flower. Will trail some 25-40cms (10-15")
A/F Marigold F1 Zenith Mix – a cross between African and French types that you never need to 'dead head?' To good to be true? This triploid type never produces seed. Consequently, as part of the natural life cycle, plants continue to try and therefore constantly produce new flowers, covering the faded ones right through to the autumn.
Mimulus – the delightful 'Monkey' flower, will bloom in just 6 weeks from sowing, so it's a great choice for starting in late May/early June to rejuvenate any tired areas in hanging baskets and other containers.

Nasturtiums – always a great stand-by and quickly and easily grown. Use a semi-trailing type like Dayglow Mix for spicing up tired basket displays, or if you prefer single colours, try the impressive new 'Jewel Cherry Rose' which produces semi-double blooms in a new unique colour.



Mimulus Super Hybrids

Petunia F1 Tidal Wave Red Velour – invariably, when planning the 'Bloom tour' there is a scruffy dry area that just needs something to brighten it up. The ideal solution? Red Velour. This Petunia just doesn't know when it's beat and will trail, sprawl and cascade over everything in its path! What's more, the plants become smothered in large crimson velvet blooms.



Nasturtium Cherry

To spruce up a basket, try Petunia F1 Evening Scentsation – not a spelling mistake, but a play on words to highlight the fact that this new introduction from Japan has delightfully honey-scented flowers. What's more the flowers are an attractive mid-blue in colour – what's not to like?

Sometimes a misfortune becomes an opportunity, and our late blast of winter may just give you the opportunity to try something new on a trial basis this year leading to really striking effects and perhaps stimulate ideas for that 'wow' factor and even better winning displays in 2019!

Here's to a 'Blooming' Lovely Summer!

A funny thing, but up until towards the end of February it seemed like a fairly average winter. But then of course the 'beasts' arrived and a new term was etched into our weather vocabulary for the future! Gales with rain, hail, and snow were compounded by freezing cold weather. A great start to another 'Bloom' season!

Britain in Bloom is nowadays of course, much more than the name implies and 'It's Your Neighbourhood' goes from strength to strength in the West country region. However, there is no doubt that the stunning floral displays so characteristic of the competition are really something to look forward to as we 'stumble' into our West Country summer! It has been a difficult start to the season and already groups around the region have



Curry Rival High Street

contacted me for advice, having suffered plant losses through some very sharp frosts. Not only the tender bedding plants in glasshouses and plastic tunnels, but also perennials in sustainable planting schemes. The effects of low temperatures have been compounded by low light levels resulting in thin, weak growth, which means that as the light improves and plants grow more strongly, they can become 'top heavy'.

So where do we go from here and how can we alleviate the effects of the weather and still achieve those fantastic displays that 'Bloomers' always seem to 'wow' the judges with? Pruning and tidying of sustainable border areas will be complete or well under way and now is the time to be replacing winter losses. It's a good time to reassess plantings and this highlights the need to keep copious notes through the gardening year for future reference. It's easy to just replace a damaged plant with the same thing, but perhaps it is an opportunity to reassess the whole border and for example choose something that will enhance the area by flowering at a different time to other plants nearby? Most of the queries I have received have concerned tender bedding for borders and containers. If losses have occurred with plants grown from seed, there may be time to re-sow, or perhaps plugs are a solution (though of course there is an effect on already tight budgets).

Here then are some thoughts and ideas of how to improve existing plants, or contemplate late additions where there is still time to sow and still meet those judging dates! Increasingly, Bloom groups are using 'large frame' bushier plants as a more economical choice for larger borders. Early sowings of plants such as Antirrhinum, Cosmos, Dahlia, Marigolds and Petunias may have suffered from our low light conditions. If so, you can pinch the young shoots and perhaps give a couple of feeds of Sulphate of Potash to harden soft growth and produce bushy plants.

There is still time to sow if you have lost plants to the inclement weather and of course it is always a good idea to have spare options. As the judging date approaches, there is nothing worse than a flowering disaster perhaps from disease or the scourge of vandalism. Here are some examples of plants you can still sow:



Work commenced on the manneristic flint grotto garden. The waterfall was in working order. After four days, the volunteers had removed onion weed and dead branches, rebuilt some small stone terraces and dug over the soil. A new garden was created with great enthusiasm.

The wet weather held off and most of the work was completed before the volunteers returned home. This first stage will be maintained by the committee and other volunteers,

Plans for the Bible Garden are already under way and more volunteers are needed to help maintain the initial stage.

Sidholme Hotel is part of Sidmouth's heritage and volunteer groups in other towns could look at ways to help to maintain these park-like estates. Sidholme has a number of trees of special interest and the SA already lead walks here. The Bible garden will consist of only plants (or similar, considering the climate) that are mentioned in the Bible. The grotto garden has been initially planted out with a variety of ferns, snowdrops, primula denticulate, heuchera and vinca minor.

If anyone wishes to know more contact Lynette at info@sidmouthinbloom.org

Judges Accreditation

The South West is the first region to undertake accreditation of its judges. They attend a one day training course and then are assessed on their performance at the next period of Regional judging.

The judges listed are those that have successfully completed the first course of assessments.

A further set of judges attended a training course following the Spring Seminar at Torquay. They will hopefully complete their assessment following this year's Regional judging.

Jane Pagano
Shaun Cregan
Denise James
Tim Eley
Lesley Jolleyman
Tony Moore
Rod Pooley
Stevie Rogers
Andy Cole
John Goulden
Terry Porter
Liam Shoemith
Bob Sweet
Paul Collier
Josephine Spring
Rosemary Coomes
Richard Budge
Michael Foy

Amberol explain how to attract business sponsorship

Amberol's MD Patience Atkinson-Gregory has advice for In Bloom groups looking to attract commercial funding.

Although the success of Britain in Bloom is largely dependent on the dedication and enthusiasm of volunteers, as you know putting together a great entry costs money. So, it's important to look at ways of making your budget further – and for ways of supplementing that budget from a range of sources.

Sponsorship from local businesses is one way that Britain in Bloom groups can help fund planting schemes, materials and activity to improve their community. Many organisations in your area may already be aware of the importance of Britain in Bloom, and many are happy to help with funding or other forms of support – after all, if a place looks attractive and well-cared for it can only benefit the local economy.

A free guide to sponsorship

At Amberol (www.amberol.co.uk) we have put together a free guide to help In Bloom groups attract commercial sponsorship. Whether you are just starting out, or you have a well-established scheme in place, our guide has lots of handy tips and advice. Here's a little preview....

Getting started - Identify the benefits of sponsorship for the organisations that you will be approaching. This should then form the basis of a structured plan to approach and convert potential sponsors. Possible benefits to highlight include:

- Improving the area around their business to improve footfall
- Raising their profile in the area
- Being perceived as community-minded business
- Good PR potential in the local media
- Fulfilling corporate social responsibility (CSR) targets,



Self watering Barrier Basket

Offer choice - Ideally you should create a specific sponsorship structure to ensure consistency. You could offer different levels of sponsorship such as Gold, Silver and Bronze packages to involve organisations of different sizes which may have varying budgets available.



Britain in Bloom South West Pride in Park award.

The parks and green spaces in the South West with the Pride in Parks award continues to be a success and the 2017 awards were presented at the South West in Bloom Seminar at The Imperial Torquay on Thursday 15th March.

You are able to enter your park for 2018 up to the **closing date of 4th June**. The criteria is very similar to last year and full details are available from the secretary or on our Web site. It is again important that the entry is community led, and there will need to be a community representative at the judging. The time allocation will depend on the size of the park or Green open space, and can be up to 2hrs.

You are to indicate on the entry form the estimated time needed to judge the entry.

Judging can take place from June until the end of the year, as often parks are better judged at different times. You will be able to indicate the general date for judging, but if you have a special event, we will try to judge it on a specific day, if sufficient notice is given. Details can be entered on the entry form, which should be returned to the secretary.

The entries are awarded one to five stars, the five star equating to a Gold award. Each park will receive a plaque, with the star rating, that will be suitable for displaying in the park.



There is a nominal entry fee of £20 for 2018

Entry forms are available from the Secretary or on our Web site.

www.southwestinbloom.org.uk

Closing date for entries
Monday 4th June.

**Britain in Bloom South West
Pride in Park award 2018**
Closing date for entries **Monday 4th June June.**



2017 Pride in Park Awards

NAME OF PARK/OPEN SPACE	TOWN/VILLAGE	AWARD
Tessier Gardens	Torquay	4 Star
Phear Park	Exmouth	4 Star
Mundy Playing Fields	Thornbury	4 Star
Curzon Street Cemetery	Calne	4 Star
Beaversbrook Sports Facility	Calne	4 Star
Rodmoor Gardens	Portishead	4 Star
Tregonigie Woodland	Falmouth	4 Star
Poltair Park	St Austell	4 Star
Kingsgate Park	Yate	5 Star
Bicclescombe Park	Ilfracombe	5 Star
Grand Western Canal	Tiverton	5 Star
Blackmore Gardens & Sports Field	Sidmouth	5 Star
Connaught Gardens	Sidmouth	5 Star
Manor Gardens	Exmouth	5 Star
Mill Marsh Park	Bovey Tracy	5 Star
Yeovil Country Park	Yeovil	5 Star
The Walled Gardens	Cannington	5 Star
Redcatch Park, Knowle	Bristol	5 Star
Troopers Hill, St George	Bristol	5 Star
Horfield Common	Bristol	5 Star
Town Green, Clifton	Bristol	5 Star
Keynsham Memorial Park	Keynsham	5 Star
Hillworth Park	Devizes	5 Star
Trenance Gardens	Newquay	5 Star
Boscawen Park	Truro	5 Star
Victoria Gardens	Truro	5 Star
Queen Mary Gardens	Falmouth	5 Star
Gyllyngdune gardens	Falmouth	5 Star
Victoria Park	Redruth	5 Star
Heartlands Pool	Camborne	5 Star
Friends of Morrab Gardens	Penzance	5 Star
Great Torrington Commons Conservators		5 Star

Explain what you are doing and why -

Create a sponsorship pack to give out to potential supporters which is designed to be persuasive; explaining what you are trying to do as well as helping them get the most from supporting you. This could include:



- The background of the project – what you are trying to achieve
- An explanation of the sponsorship structure
- A summary of the benefits of sponsorship/involvement
- Photographs of examples of sponsorship and/or case studies
- A template press release for the local media announcing new sponsorship
- Fundraising suggestions – ways in which staff could generate funds internally for your initiative



Make it worth their while -

Sponsorship does need to be two way street. Most businesses will be looking for some form of acknowledgment of their investment, even if it's just a thank you note. Some In Bloom groups hold events such as tea parties to thank their sponsors – which is also a great PR opportunity for all involved.

Amberol Floral Fountain

There are many more ideas and suggestions in the *Amberol Guide to Commercial Sponsorship* which is available FREE from Amberol. Call 01773 830 930, email info@amberol.co.uk or write to Amberol at The Plantation, King Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7TT for your free copy.

New RHS programme to get young people growing

The RHS Campaign for School Gardening's brand new project, I Can Grow offers young people the chance to discover the power of plants and their benefits to them, their community and the wider world. The project will empower young people to create a campaign and shout about environmental and social issues they believe in, linking to one or more of the following themes: wildlife, climate change, food production and wellbeing.

Encourage your school groups and young people to visit schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/icangrow to sign up and receive a free inspiration pack.

Spring Seminar 2018

This years Spring Seminar was held at the Imperial Hotel, Torquay on 15th March. General responses from delegates is that it was one of our best Ever. We had four splendid speakers, all with quite different presentations.



The day started with Allison Herbert, Bid manager at Bath, showing how the Bid has provided such an improvement to Bath, with floral decorations, extra street maintenance and cleaning together with supporting the local community. She showed how this could be done to provide the same benefits for your community.

This was followed by Stephanie Purser, who showed the tremendous work that the community of Page Park in Staple Hill have done in securing Lottery funding for restoring the park, and celebrating its history. Added to this they then obtained funds to build a new café in the park.



This has been a great asset in encouraging more use of the park and providing a very good community facility. Besides the very successful Lottery grants the group organise a host of other fund raising events together with a team of volunteers to carry out further improvements and maintenance of the park.



The morning concluded with a very enthusiastic presentation by Anna Forbes, Project Officer and Volunteer Co-ordinator with ARC, including the Stonebridge Wild River Reserve , a 15 acre water meadow with the River Kennet flowing through it in Marlborough.

The teams of volunteers carry out maintenance on the river banks to protect them, and promote their use by wildlife, of which there seems to be an abundance.



The volunteers also take on some major projects , such as creating a wetland area.



In the afternoon we had a very visual and interesting presentation by Mark Wasilewski – Manager of St James’s Park and The Green Park.

As manager of the Royal parks he had many interesting tales to tell on the history and events that are held in the Royal Parks.



They have also discovered some lost features in the parks.



Mark concluded the afternoon by presenting the 2017 Parks awards. Details are elsewhere in the newsletter.