



South & South East & London in Bloom
Green Lines August 2021



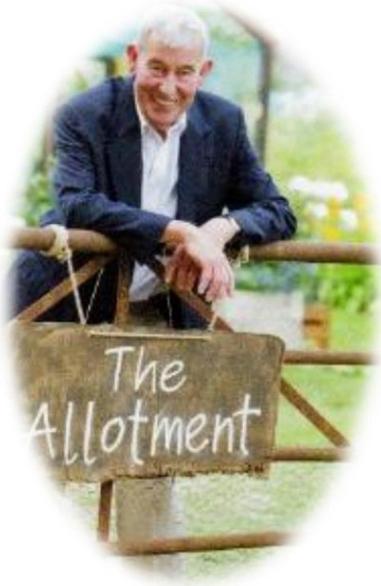
Following the sad demise of our London in Bloom Patron Daniel Hearsom, London has been considering who could replace Daniel. At a recent London in Bloom meeting this was discussed and one name came to the fore. Someone who had been involved with London in Bloom since the 1970s, was Chairman for many years and who has played a major role in Britain in Bloom as a judge and Chairman of judges, so simple. We are therefore delighted to announce that our South & South East in Bloom Patron Jim Buttress VMH has kindly agreed to also become London in Bloom Patron. Great to have you onboard, Jim.

Now having completed our judging, reviewed all of your reports and decided on our awards and category winners we are getting closer to the first of our region's awards. South & South East in Bloom will be on two days, September 16th & 17th and you all should have received notification of this from Anne & Kate. The London in Bloom Awards is similarly over two days on the 6th & 7th October. To remind everyone, especially our new entries this year, our Awards are and have always been "Oscar" style and therefore no results will be announced before the actual awards. We look forward to sharing the results and awards with you and we will send a link to the Zoom Awards about a week beforehand to those who have signed up!

Best Wishes

Mark & Peter

Jim Buttress VMH – Patron South & South East in Bloom & London in Bloom



In terms of the Bloom Campaign, September and October are busy and hopefully exciting months for receiving the results and starting to plan for next year.

Bloom participants are no different than all the school children who were eagerly waiting for their GCSE & A level results last month to find out what awards they had received.

This year is a virtual award ceremony but hopefully next year we can return to the old formula. It was one of the most enjoyable events I attend each year.

This year was a very different campaign to organize and implement but the efforts by everyone are to be applauded. When you receive your results, it will include a report from the judge or assessors. I know from personal experience that judges spend a long time completing these reports. They are intended to provide the entrant with what the judges or assessor thought were the good points but also guidance on areas of improvement. It is important to share these reports with the Committee, Parish Council and other organisations that are involved with the entry. All the reports are read by the Trustees before the Awards to make sure, as much as possible, that they are specific and informative and that the comments will help entrants to review what they have done and come up with an action plan for the coming year.

I regret to say as a judge that it's sometimes very frustrating when advice and recommendations have not been actioned or worst still just ignored.

When we receive our allocation of entries a copy of the previous year's report is attached. All the judges will make a note of these recommendations and include them in their discussions during a tour.

When you submit the tour itinerary please make sure you highlight these recommendations and what action you may have taken to meet them, or why you felt that for one reason or another they have not been implemented.

It does pay a dividend to be one jump ahead of the judge or assessor.

Finally, congratulations to everyone.

Keep Safe, Keep Smiling, Keep Gardening. Jim

GARDENING TIPS & TASKS FOR SEPTEMBER

Reg Leach, SSEiB Judge and former Parks Manager – retired.

As we all know it has been another difficult summer with Covid in its various forms, still with us. Despite the ongoing pandemic, it has been fantastic to see that you, our 'Bloom' family, have not been held up from carrying on with the brightening up of their local areas and building on the strong community spirit that prevails.

Well done everyone and continue to keep safe!

As August drifts into September, the garden will start to look tired, with plants having expended a lot of energy during the summer. Keep feeding and deadheading to extend the summer season well into the autumn.

Here are a few tasks for the month ahead.

Borders:

Continue to deadhead herbaceous perennials to encourage another flush. Leave any faded sunflower heads on, as they will continue to feed the birds – especially finches and leave some of the architectural plant heads and grasses on with their seed heads to give autumn/winter interest.

Climbers:

Wisteria will now have long straggly growths. Cut these back to two or three buds from the old wood to keep them in check and to retain the old framework. If you want to increase the framework, select appropriate shoots, and tie them into the area you want to cover. Prune and tie in climbing and rambling roses and summer flowering clematis in the same way.

Pruning:

Prune back in late spring and early summer flowering shrubs that have flowered. This will allow new growth to be produced for next year's flowers. Leave on old flower heads such as Hydrangeas to give autumn/winter interest and to protect the new buds beneath. Consider cutting back shrubs that may be taking up too much space, reduce and reshape them. Alternatively, if they are not too large, but in the wrong place, consider replanting into a more appropriate position elsewhere in the garden – but leave this well into October as we may still get some warm weather and they may dry out.

Once your HT roses have had their last flush of flower, prune to half their height to reduce wind rock, open up the centre of the plant and remove dead, diseased and crossing over stems. Leave the final prune until next March.

Bedding:

If your summer bedding is still looking good, don't be tempted to take it out too soon - we may have an Indian summer!

Keep deadheading to encourage more flowering. Towards the end of September and into October your bedding will probably have passed its best so consider removing and preparing the soil for winter/spring bedding. If you have some good humus from your compost bin, add this to your soil before replanting, or buy some well-rotted horse manure and incorporate it into the soil. If you sowed seeds of Wallflower, Bellis, Polyanthus last spring, late September early October is the ideal time to consider planting them out into their flowering position.

Baskets & Containers:

Hanging baskets and containers may now start to look past their best - but hopefully not. If they are, empty, wash and sterilize to kill off vine weevils and or grubs before storing.

If you are replanting them replenish them with new compost. Plant up with winter pansies, some variegated ivy, winter flowering heather, or cyclamen along with some miniature bulbs to give a bright and colourful display during the autumn/winter months. Another alternative is to leave the planting up until later in the winter/early spring. This way baskets and troughs will not be at risk if we have a hard winter, but if you do plant them up and have kept them undercover or in a cold greenhouse, ensure the plants have been fully hardened off before installing them outside and exposing them to the weather next spring.

Lawns:

If your lawn has bare patches, there is a thatch build-up, or it has become compacted, give the lawn some TLC. Towards the end of September (once there has been some significant rainfall to soften the lawns surface), rake or scarify the lawn to remove dead thatch, mow off with a box mower and aerate by using a fork at regular intervals across the lawn. Then lightly top dress with a fine loam and grass seed mix. By also applying an autumn feed to the lawn it will help strengthen root growth.

Weed Control:

Continue spraying perennial weeds so they can be eradicated while the weather is still warm and before the winter sets in. Weedkillers are less effective in colder weather. However, it's always preferable to dig out perennial weeds if at all possible.

Whenever you have to use chemicals in the garden always read the label before applying and where possible consider other control methods first.

Increasing Plant Numbers:

Consider taking cuttings of less hardy plants such as geranium, (Pelargonium) and later, bring them into the house onto a windowsill or put them into a cool greenhouse during the winter months.

Towards the end of the month and into October while there is still some warmth in the soil, you can start to lift and divide herbaceous plants that are becoming too large and dominating. Dig up and divide the roots with two forks back-to-back gently prise roots apart. Replant into gaps you have in the border, firm in well and give the roots a good watering once replanted. However, if your border is still looking good, leave any lifting or dividing until the early winter.

Birdfeeders:

Keep bird feeders topped up throughout the summer as well as the winter, as this encourages birds into your garden all year round. The array of birds, particularly finches that I have had in the garden this summer have been amazing. They are also happy to feed off greenfly (aphids) and other pests giving some variety to their diet - so your investment in birdseed is well worth it!

Plats attracting Butterflies/Moths and Bees:

As promised last month, here is a selection of wildlife attracting plants:

SHRUBS:

- Lavender and Rosemary are two of the most attractive plants for bees.
- Berberis - such as *B. darwinii* with orange/yellow flowers. However Berberis can be vicious with their spines so consider carefully where you plant them, but the berries can be stunning!
- Buddleija is a well-known butterfly favourite - Consider Buddleija globosa with orange ball-like flowers and great scent or *B. alternifolia* with smaller more delicate flowers.
- Ceanothus such as *C. impressus* and other varieties.
- Cistus x purpureus in its various forms and colours.
- Cytisus battandieri. It has a great scent too.
- Cotoneaster such as *C. horizontalis*— great berries in the autumn.
- Daphne 'Pink Fragrance' along with many other varieties.
- Hebe – a large range of colours and heights.
- Honeysuckle (*Lonicera*) attracts bees and butterflies as well as night-flying moths.
- Jasmine (winter) - *Jasminum nudiflorum*.
- Ribes sanguineum.
- Trachelospermum jasminoides (Climber)

HERBS:

All are great for attracting bees if allowed to flower, particularly Oregano, Thyme and Chives.



HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS/BIENNIALS & PRAIRIE PLANTS



(All in a variety of forms and colours):

- Achillea.
- Agastache.
- Aster.
- Borage.
- Catananche. (will self-seed).
- Cosmos.
- Digitalis.
- Echinacea.
- Echinops.
- Echium pininana. A biennial with towering blue flower spikes. (Can self-seed)
- Eupatorium.
- Helenium.
- Helianthemum.
- Lavatera.
- Nepeta (catmint).
- Perovskia.
- Phlox.
- Pulmonaria.
- Rudbeckia.
- Salvia x sylvestris.
- Scabious.
- Sedum.
- Stachys lanata.
- Verbascum.
- Verbena bonariensis. (Will self-seed).

SUMMER FLOWERING BULBS:

These are also a useful source for bees and butterflies, so well worth considering - particularly Alliums, Lillies, and Scilla.

OTHER PLANTS:

Heathers – Erica and Calluna (Ling) and the often-forgotten Daboecia. Some Heather species do not need overly acidic soil to flourish.

Don't forget the sunflower, which attracts bees to the flowers and later birds for the seeds.

In addition, some of the less hardy plants can be planted into gaps during the summer into the border to attract butterflies; two of my favourites are Heliotrope and Lantana.

Some of the plants I have listed are early flowering to catch bees emerging after hibernation and others for feeding on during the summer and into the autumn. A good selection of these plants will help bees and butterflies for much of the year.

Of course, the list is endless, but I hope the small selection above will inspire you when considering introducing new plants into your garden for next year.

Don't forget:

- Continue to hoe beds and borders to prevent annual weeds from flowering and seeding.
- Remove dead leaves from the lawn and the borders that will start to multiply as the autumn progresses and compost them.
- Hedges may need one last trim for this year.
- Carry out final checks for aphids, blackfly, black spot, and mildew. Treat as necessary.
- Keep the slug and snail patrols going, keeping their numbers down, which may help next year! BUT don't throw them over the fence into your neighbour's garden!!



St James's Park Pelicans

Here they are at 6 am heading out for kippers for breakfast! Park Manager & London in Bloom Co-Chair Mark Wasilewski assembles a posse from task force police at Old Scotland Yard stables, and some help from passing builders to round them up and load them into the back of a police van and drove them back to St James's Park Where, when the van doors were opened, they stepped out as if stepping out from an Uber.....

How they managed to cross Whitehall we don't know says Mark unless they used the pelican crossing!



The quintessential allotment shed!

Found in the New Forest a couple of years ago by one of our esteemed judges.

Is this the quintessential allotment shed? Or do you know better?

A slice of Horticultural History



As a lifelong horticulturist, one of my favourite horticulture features is the Walled Garden. Walled Gardens offer every possible growing opportunity whether it's for fruit, vegetables, or flowers and if there is a Greenhouse or two then I am in Garden Heaven. So when I discovered the Garden a few years ago and seen its restoration project started to rebuild this once thriving garden, I thought I would take a trip down memory lane and visit once again, and I was not disappointed.

So, down a pretty, hedgerow-lined lane full of cow parsley, ox-eye daisies, and buttercups and with long vistas across the High Weald of Kent, is Water Lane a hidden walled garden, a historical horticultural masterpiece with Grade II Victorian glasshouses dating back to the 1800s, including a Melon House, Cucumber House, Pelargonium House and Peach Case and a Vinery, on what was once the Tongswood Estate.

The new custodian's **Nick Selby** and **Ian James**, who bring with them a wealth of food and horticultural passion from their previous business, are collaborating, with many partners, notably East Sussex based architectural company, RX Architects, to restore the site to its full capacity in the next ten years as a productive walled garden. The Garden has 13 Victorian glasshouses and 72 no-

dig beds, growing vegetables, fruit, herbs to provide for the garden restaurant and cut flowers for sale.

The site of the old polytunnel in the Garden has been transformed into a beautiful terrace with a tented stretch awning, open kitchen, wood-fired oven and tables and chairs. Every table has open views out onto the glasshouses, long flower borders and vegetable and cut flower beds. The Walled Garden holds many aspects of note and will delight both amateur and serious gardeners. In the height of Summer, the focus of floral activity is the incredible Melon House Border which runs nearly 30m long and is 3m deep. The star of the show each Spring is the *Euphorbia characias* subsp. *wulfenii*, with its chartreuse-green heads that provide colour and structure throughout the bed and has also, delightfully, self-seeded around the rest of the garden. The acid-green of the *Euphorbia* is perfectly offset by the deep red and purple of *Berberis thunbergii* Rose Glow and *Physocarpus Diablo* with its tiny pink flowers, *Aquilegia Ruby Port*, **Geum's** Totally Tangerine and Marmalade, and the swaying purple pom-pom colour pops from the *Allium cristophii*.

So if you are keen on seeing these historic sites thrive and remain for all to see and if you are in the Hawkhurst area why not drop in, have a cup of tea and a piece of cake, and take in the wonderful hidden Walled Garden.

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturdays 8.30am - 5.30pm | Sunday 9.30am - 4pm

The Walled Garden at Water Lane, Water Lane, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 5DH Instagram: @water.lane www.waterlane.net

Ed...

Brief History of Public Parks – Kate Harris, Campaign Manager

Walk around any UK city, town or village and, likely, it won't be long before you stumble upon a park. You rarely find these empty, alive with the sound of children playing, dogs being walked, and the chatter of people as enjoy the fresh air. According to a Parliament publication, there are in fact over 27,000 parks and open spaces across the UK and it is estimated these are used by a staggering 37 million people each year.

Ranging from tiny pocket parks to playgrounds, country parks, all the way up to our enormous national parks that people travel from all over the World to witness their breathtaking views. I think what I am getting at is, in short, that we are very lucky and in truth, our lives would be all the poorer without them. If you have read any of my previous articles, you may see a pattern forming. I have a bit of a liking for horticultural history, well any kind of history really, but that would not be so relevant to the newsletter dedicated to horticulture, so I will keep on track.

Before the creation of public open spaces with access for all, green spaces fell into far more exclusive categories, a time when parks were a luxury for the upper classes, private spaces for those with money. Before the 1820s is believed that there were no public parks and open spaces. There were 'narrow paved walks', private estates, London Squares (and their equivalent), and pleasure gardens.



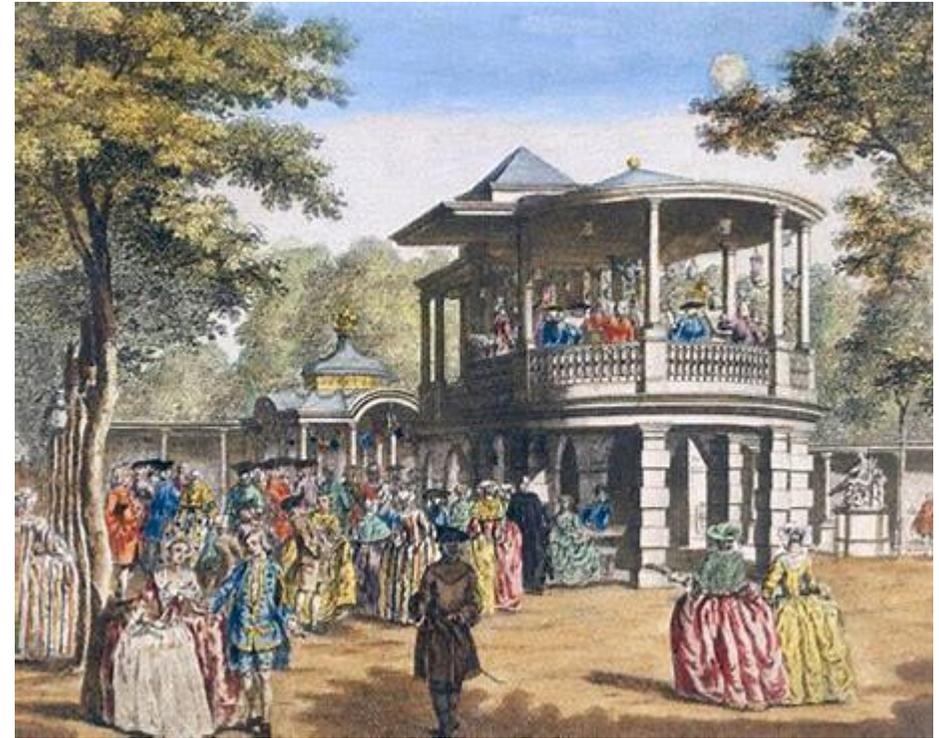
Dating back to the 17th century, London Squares have a long history. An oasis of green surrounded by iron fencing and locked gates, these Squares were there for the sole usage of the inhabitants of the surrounding houses. Doctors recommended these spaces to allow access to clean air and these calm and peaceful squares provided just that. As you might imagine some of these beautiful London Squares take part in London in Bloom each year. Westminster boasts many of these once padlocked parks that you can visit and walk around, Mount Street Gardens and Berkeley Square are just a couple of examples. Some however remain true to their roots and remain private, like those cared for by Grosvenor Landscapes, such as Belgrave Square and Eaton Square or Warwick Square, Mecklenburgh Square Garden and Cadogan Place South. The Kemptown Enclosures in Brighton, which date back to the 1820s was created and landscaped for the use of the 105 houses that make up the Kemptown Estate. Although not identical to those in London, these are another example of green spaces created for those with access to money and are even said to have been visited by Victoria and Albert.

The 18th & 19th centuries saw the growth of the urban middle class, rising incomes paved the way for the age of 'commercial leisure'. Firework displays, operas, zoo's, amusement rides, music and masquerades, Pleasure Gardens were the place to see and be seen, to eat, dance and show off your finery amongst your peers. Two classic examples of these pleasure gardens happen to be entrants into London in Bloom, Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, Lambeth and Cremorne Gardens, Kensington, and Chelsea. These pleasure gardens were only accessed once you paid for your entry ticket, once again leaving those in the lower classes without access to green space.

At their peak in the mid-19th century, there were an estimated 5000 private estates, large sprawling acres of land where the wealthy families and their guests could enjoy outdoor activities, such as painting for the ladies and hunting for the men - we must remember this was a time of gender-specific pursuits. Both our Bloom regions are home to some of these incredible houses and gardens, where you can immerse yourself in the majesty and history of these estates. (I have listed those who take part in the Bloom at the bottom of this article, so please do visit and show your support if you can)

The life of the poor and working classes was in stark contrast to those of their upper-class counterparts. More and more people flocked to our towns and our capital city, further adding to the pollution and poor living conditions. The creation of public parks meant that green space was no longer just for those with money. The first of these parks is believed to have opened in Preston, with Victoria Park (which was then part of Hackney, now in the borough of Tower Hamlets), is suggested as the first in London, quickly followed by Battersea Park, Wandsworth, Finsbury Park which intersects Islington, Hackney & Haringey and Southwark Park, Southwark not long after.

The Victorians placed importance on health and wellbeing and various Victorian Health Acts helped to cement the importance of the green lungs in the landscape of London and other major towns and cities.





Arundel Castle, Arundel

The Home of Charles Darwin – Down House, Bromley

Belmont House & Gardens, Throwley

Denman's Gardens, Fontwell

Hever Castle Gardens, Nr Edenbridge

Gunnelsbury Park, Ealing

Across LiB and S&SEiB we have seen a marked increase in the number of green spaces involved in the Bloom, now numbering close to 300. That does not include the considerable number of 'Friends of' groups who are part of our Bloom community. These groups represent an incredible resource to their local communities but also to the local councils whose parks budgets are ever decreasing.

So, if you have the time, get outside, enjoy the incredible green spaces that our beautiful regions have to offer, use them to watch the seasons change in all their glory. Support your local park and even those further afield, teach your children and loved ones about how special these spaces truly are, pick up your litter and most importantly love them and treat that with the utmost care and respect so they are still here to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Highdown Gardens, Goring-by-Sea

Osborne, East Cowes

Horniman Museum & Gardens, Lewisham.

The Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, Romsey

Chiswick House, Chiswick

Brockwell Park, Herne Hill