



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

Maintaining our Environment



Since 1992 (Rio Earth Summit), Bloom has changed, and I believe it is more relevant than ever before. Caring for our gardens, green spaces, planting sustainably and reducing the effects of climate are all part of the Bloom assessments and advice given to our amazing entries. In 2021 we stepped outside of Britain in Bloom categories and extended the opportunities for all to get involved. Front Gardens, Balconies, Grow you Own, Wildlife Gardening were all added to our programs. So, there should be an opportunity for all to get involved. But if we have missed a category, I am sure you will let us know.

The RHS Britain in Bloom Campaign Federation members have reviewed the standard marking sheet and added several features to encourage more excellent care for the environment. We sincerely hope that these will encourage us all to do as much as possible to protect our local and regional environment.

By reducing the use of Peat, harvesting and storing rainwater for those dry periods, planting sustainability to reduce the effects of hot, dry summers and planting plants that can capture carbon and pollutants. Composting at home and using the composted material to add to the soil to mitigate drought and provide much-needed nutrients for our hungry plants.

If you are like me and like to grow crops in the Greenhouse, Polytunnel or Cold Frame, try to reuse plastic pots and trays rather than throw them away. Use old compost bags as composting bags (see article below) and reduce green waste.

Date for your diary: We have agreed on the date and location of this year's South & South East in Bloom Seminar. It will be at the Wisley Hilltop Centre on March 30th. More information will be available soon.

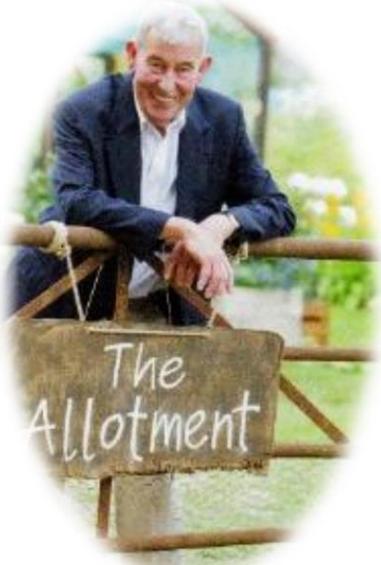
London in Bloom has yet to fix a date & venue for its seminar, and we will update you as soon as possible.

Keep Gardening

Ed

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

Chelsea Reminiscences



One of the few advantages of getting older is that you have time to reflect and reminisce. I take my Bowler Hat off to the Royal Horticultural Society for staging flower shows at Hampton Court, Chelsea, Tatton Park and Malvern Autumn this year.

Although the exhibitors reported good sales, the size and variety of exhibits were limited. Unfortunately, this decline has occurred over the last five years, with COVID 19 only contributing. The floral pavilions at shows across the country were always the main attraction.

Every show, whether County or RHS, would contain at least five exhibitors displaying the same plants. I accept this was before Garden Centre and Online trading. I still remember the excitement of entering these marquees. The exhibits were a work of art. The exhibitor's shop window. At least 100-120 exhibitors at each show. Apart from the catalogues, this was often an opportunity for visitors to see plants for the first time.

In my last article, I spoke about my first Chelsea in 1966. Rhododendrons, Azaleas, and Camellias were shown by Hilliers, Notcutts, Knaphill Ruthe's and Slocock. Roses were represented by Harry Wheatcroft, MacCredies, Dicksons, Harkness, Beales & Austens.

Sutton Seeds display included every vegetable they sold. I remember one of their seedsmen told me they grew three acres of Parsley just to bed the vegetables into their display dishes. Thankfully Medwyn & the Robinson family continue this traditional way of displaying vegetables.

One other display which always drew large crowds was the stand of Carters (Carters Tested Seeds – Raynes Park London). They provided all the seeds for Woolworths. The stand was a shop window for every annual they sold.

I could continue, and one day I may, but it is more important to look to the future and particularly to all the new Gardeners that appeared during the lockdown.

I am encouraged by the number of shows that are being staged at the RHS Gardens. Beautiful gardens to visit, exhibitors are spread out throughout the gardens. All gardens have excellent catering facilities and large car parks.

Many of the stately homes have followed this initiative, e.g., Blenheim, Woburn, and Beaulieu. Many of the smaller open gardens invite local nurseries. A good example of this is Perennials Garden at Fullers Hill, which they will host at a particularly interesting place in the season.

Next year, when the Snowdrops are at their best, they have invited several local nurseries and a leading authority on Snowdrops who will give talks and lead tours around the gardens.

Please let Peter, Anne or Kate know if this is happening in your area.

Farmers Markets are also a place to acquire locally sourced plants.

However, the Chelsea Flower Show this year had two new projects that reflect the present climate. The first was the "Balcony" Gardens. They were a selection of balconies that illustrated making the most of a small area, encouraging wildlife, and a green-up small pocket of outdoor space.

Considering the number of people occupying these modern developments, the results are impressive, softening the landscape and improving mental wellbeing with beautiful views of plants that will thrive in this environment. See this category in both London & South & South East.

The second new concept for 2021 was House Plant Studio. This was due to the extraordinary popularity of House Plants again because of the pandemic. It is common knowledge that if you incorporate House Plants throughout your house, they help to purify the air and boost wellbeing.

It is very interesting to note that several schools have been experimenting with House Plants in classrooms that have thrived and consistently improved internal air quality.

I hope that both concepts reappear at the shows in 2022.

Keep Safe, Keep Smiling and of course Keep Gardening

Jim

Welcome to the November gardening column, with gardening Tips & Tasks for December.

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

This year is mainly about finishing jobs such as pruning and tidying up the garden before winter fully sets in. Many jobs will have been completed by now, but along with last month's end of year tasks, here's a reminder of a few more.

Winter/Spring bedding:

You may still find some spring bedding plants and bulbs in the garden centre but hold off planting if we are experiencing sharp frosts that may have hardened the soil and wait until the weather turns milder.

Pruning:

Although pruning was touched on in the last Bulletin, and many of you may well have started the pruning process, it's just worth reminding ourselves, as pruning techniques are helpful all year round.

Pruning encourages more flowers, fresh-coloured stems; reshaping; containment; improving the health of the shrub, or all these reasons? When to prune will depend on its flowering time in the year. As a rule, the best time to prune flowering shrubs is soon after flowering has finished, thereby enabling the plant to produce enough new growth to flower the following year.



The principles of pruning, as mentioned last month, are:

To remove all dead and dying wood; cut out thin and weak growth; remove stems that are crossing over each other and open the shrub's centre to allow in more light.

Sometimes we also need to prune to contain a shrub's size within a small space in the garden or stop it from encroaching onto a public pavement. Always use secateurs for pruning - not hedge trimmers or strimmer's! When you have finished pruning, the shrub should look a natural shape and **not** rounded off or lollypop shaped – unless, of course, you are creating an 'interesting' topiary!

Shrub Pruning:

Some shrubs flower on the previous year's wood while others flower on the current seasons wood. For example, Forsythia and Philadelphus will bloom on the last year's wood, whereas Buddleia flowers on the current wood will determine how and when to prune.

With Philadelphus, for example, prune after flowering (around July/August), taking out to ground level about a third of the older stems to encourage new growth from the base whilst leaving last year's wood. A similar process is followed for specie roses (the more natural ones such as the rugosa types), which are pruned after flowering, taking a percentage of the old wood to ground level.

Always use clean, sharp secateurs, and make a diagonal cut just above an outward-facing bud. Make sure that the cuts are clean, as a jagged cut may allow disease in. A clean-cut also allows the wound to heal quicker and form a callous over the cut more effectively. Also, avoid leaving 'snags' a section of stem left above a bud or leaf joint. This will die off and cause disease into the plant, so always prune as close above a bud as possible.

After pruning, lightly fork the soil around the shrub to relieve any compaction. Add well-rotted manure if you have any so that the winter rains can water the nutrients in, and it will also act as a mulch keeping annual weeds at bay.

When it comes to pruning shrubs, such as Cornus (Dogwood), these should be pruned after the Winter period, just as the stem colour is starting to be masked by the appearance of new leaves in the spring. Cut the stems down to about two buds above ground level, where new red stems will grow. If the stems are not cut down, the bright red colour, which appears brightest on new wood, will be higher up the stem year on year and lose its vibrancy. Try inserting some of the cut stems into the ground; you'll be surprised how many will root.



Management of Herbaceous Plants:

Remove stakes and supports from herbaceous and perennial plants. Cut down the old growth to ground level unless there are seed heads beneficial to birds. If you have mature plants, you can lift and divide them to increase your stock, to fill in gaps elsewhere in the garden, give to friends and neighbours or create a new border or project using your surplus plants. To divide the rootball, dig it out and carefully insert two forks back-to-back through the middle of the rootball and slowly prise the two halves apart. Replanting them to the same original depth.

Roses:

It is good practice to reduce HTs roses by half their height this month to reduce wind rock. The final prune should be left until next March. For climbers, prune back this year's growth to 2 or 3 buds of the main frame. Apply this pruning to most climbing plants to maintain their shape.

If you want to increase the climber's framework, tie some of the new shoots into the spaces you want to fill.

Specie roses - take out some older ground-level shoots, leaving newer growth to flower next year.

Winter Tasks:

- Weed and clean under hedges.
- Edge up lawns that abut footpaths or borders with a sharp half-moon edger to redefine the lawn.
- Sweep paths and the odd corners to remove residues that may harbour next year's slugs, snails, and all manner of pests.
- Clean last year's pots, troughs, and containers, using a mild, safe disinfectant such as Jeyes Fluid and store ready for next year.
- Clean and sharpen hand tools and mower blades ready for next year.
- Lift planted containers off the ground, if possible, onto ceramic legs to help drainage through the winter and reduce waterlogging.
- During mild weather, it's worth looking at repairs to fences.
- Check trellis and plant supporting wires that may need repairing or replacing – it will be easier to inspect at this time of year visually.

Planting – See last month:

Tender plants:

These will probably have been taken care of already, but make sure they are well mulched if they are left outdoors and check that those in the greenhouse are okay. If some show signs of decay (such as pelargoniums cuttings), discard those infected to protect the rest.

Greenhouse:

If you have one that is housing tender plants, check the temperature is maintained above freezing. Maybe install a heater with a frost stat, so heating only comes on when the temperature drops to 0° C (32° F). Another consideration is that if the greenhouse gets very damp in the winter and you have an electricity supply, try a dehumidifier set to its lowest at night. The recycled water collected can then be used to water plants in need of a drink!

As with pots and containers, give the structure a good clean inside to eliminate pests and diseases. On warmer days, provide some ventilation to refresh the air.

Christmas Decorations:

As Christmas approaches, look around the garden to see what gems to use for table decorations and look for berry plants such as holly and cotoneaster to make a wreath for the front door. Around Christmas Eve, look around the garden for winter flowering shrubs such as Chimonanthus praecox, Viburnum x bodnantense 'Dawn' and Hamamelis x intermedia 'Jelena'. It's surprising how early some of these are flowering these days. They make a wonderfully scented centrepiece for the table. They don't last too long once cut, but their scent is fantastic.

A famous and iconic Actor said this – who was it?

“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow” .



Congratulations

Many congratulations go to Nick Hagon of Crawley Borough Council, who receives the RHS long service award for services to horticulture.

Nick is soon to retire as Manager of Tilgate Park, Crawley. Nick is a Judge for South & South East in Bloom.

Well, done and well deserved.

Linda Ford of Sandown Castle Community Garden Group provided the link below from the National Gardens Scheme; it could be a funding source.

<https://ngs.org.uk/cga-application/>

Thanks, Linda



Winter gardens – the perfect wildlife destination.

Kate Harris – Campaign Manager

If you are like my son, you might be refusing to acknowledge the drop in temperature - he still leaves the house in just a t-shirt, telling me it is 'not that cold' – but the rest of us have been reaching to nudge the thermostat, wearing warmer attire, or donning a coat before leaving the house.

Whilst wildlife has its ways of dealing with the inevitable temperature changes heading our way, and we can all do our little bit to help. Slight changes we can make to the way we garden in winter can be hugely beneficial.

As the glory of our summer gardens, allotments, balconies, and communal spaces fade, it is so tempting to cut back, rake and tidy ready for the spring, but

where we can, holding off on these simple things can provide much-needed warmth, safety, and refuge for our wildlife. Herbaceous borders left with seed heads and berries are a sure-fire way of encouraging wildlife into your garden at this time of year.



Twig or stem bundles and leaf litter gathered, even hidden at the back of your allotments and borders, can provide an ideal space for countless small mammals and invertebrates and even amphibians like toads to hide and hibernate. Clumps of ornamental grasses left alone over winter can be home to insects and sometimes provide a hibernaculum for Frogs, Toads, Newts, Slow Worms and even hedgehogs and who does not want to encourage these prickly friends into our gardens with all the slug and snail munching benefits that they bring.

Leaf litter and other decaying plant matter left alone until spring is another beautiful way to help. This layer helps to trap air between it and the soil below as ground frosts arrive, like providing a blanket for anything hiding underneath.

Tidied and stacked plant pots provide a great hiding place for bees, insects, and invertebrates to spend the winter as these are often cool and dry. Sheds and garages also provide similar cool and dry conditions. They are often home to overwintering adult butterflies, spiders, and ladybirds, so they are best left to their own devices during low temperatures.

On the other hand, ponds could do with a bit of extra care at this time of year; decaying plant matter left in ponds can create gasses as they break down. As temperatures drop and ice forms over the surface of ponds, these gasses can build up and be harmful to overwintering amphibians. Removing visible decaying plant matter can help reduce the gasses created. Adding a tennis ball or something similar can prevent the pond from entirely freezing, allowing these gasses to be released.

Compost heaps at this time of year will also be an ideal home for many species, from small mammals, hedgehogs, insects to reptiles like slow worms. The decaying matter is also a significant source of warmth.

While nest boxes will not be used for their usual purpose, cleaning these can provide a warm, dry place for many smaller birds to spend cold nights.

I make sure that my bird feeders are stocked at this time of year, and there is a clean, full water bowl out to help supplement the local bird's diet. Not only is this beneficial to the birds – and greedy squirrels who don't understand the words 'squirrel proof' – it's a beautiful way to be able to see some of our beautiful garden visitors without our disturbing them. If we are fortunate, there are often migrating and overwintering species that visit our gardens too. Window feeders are also a fantastic way to view birds up close.

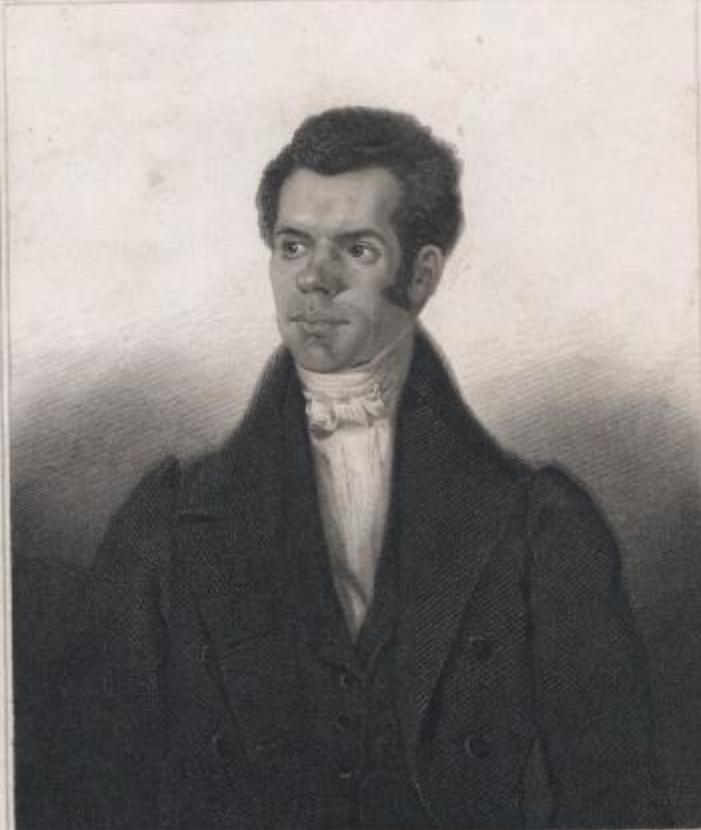
So, where you can, be a little less tidy this autumn and winter, provide shelter and some food and water, grab a cup of tea – or coffee – and enjoy the garden visitors who will be highly grateful for your help.



The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies. – Gertrude Jekyll

The incredible life of Thomas "T.B" Birch Freeman

Kate Harris – Campaign Manager



Thomas was born in Twyford, near Winchester, Hampshire, on December 6th, 1809. His father, Thomas Snr, an African freedman, had arrived in England via the West Indies. He travelled to Britain and his aristocratic 'master' and was freed under the Emancipation Act. After he was freed, Thomas Snr stayed on as a gardener, where he met and married Amy Birch, a maid under the same family employ. They lived in Twyford as middle classed family, with Thomas Snr passing away when Thomas was just six years old. The town itself was a bastion of Wesleyan Methodism, an interest that Thomas would revisit later in life.

Following in his father's footsteps, he became a gardener on a Suffolk estate. Here Thomas found an interest in botany, which never left him. He was a keen reader with a substantial personal library and went on to study botany. He was an extremely knowledgeable horticulturalist well versed in Latin botanical names.

Thomas trained as a botanist and plantsman at Kew and became Head Gardener to Sir Robert Harland at Orwell Park, Suffolk. As he got older, Thomas found a renewed interest in religion, particularly the Methodist faith of his youth and felt he should follow his calling and become a missionary. His employer Sir Robert Harland asked him to choose between his faith and his job to encourage him to stay. Despite the pleading of Roberts wife, Arethusa, Thomas resigned from his position to become a missionary.

Thomas found his way to the Gold Coast and worked as a missionary for many years, often visiting the UK. In West Africa, he spent much time documenting, researching, and collating local flora and fauna. He frequently corresponded with Sir William Hooker, the first Director of Kew Gardens, regarding the West African flora. When colonial Ceylon Coffee crops failed due to disease, he introduced a Liberian coffee species and sent four hundred seeds to Kew Gardens.

As he got older, he purchased a plot of land in Accra, Ghana, near a river and farmed fruit and vegetable crops supplied to European settlers and residents. He is credited for organising the Society for Agriculture in Accra and advocating for building higher education schools. During this time, he also rekindled his interest in botany and horticulture. He began corresponding and sending rare species and information on Orchids he had acquired to Kew Gardens.

Thomas passed away of influenza at age 80 on August 12th, 1890. His portrait can be found hanging in the National Portrait Gallery.

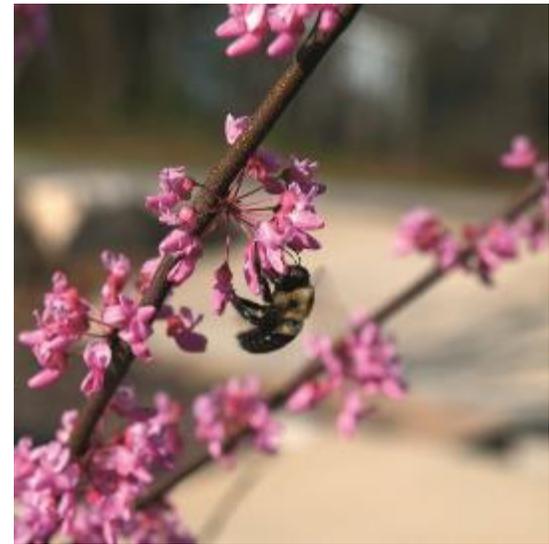
In his lifetime, Thomas was many things, a botanist, a husband, a father, a Methodist, a Government Official, a writer, the longest surviving Methodist missionary in West Africa, a horticulturalist, Kew graduate and more, with a legacy that has far outlived him. His story is much more than I could fit in this article, and I would encourage anyone reading this to spend some time finding out more about Thomas' incredible life.

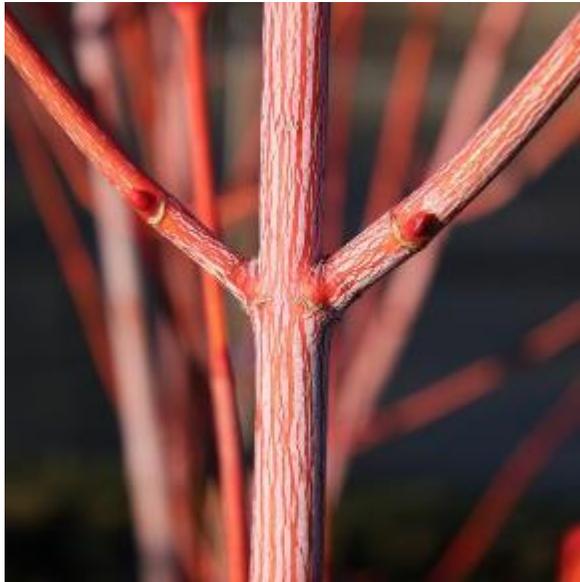
Trees for Small Gardens

Trees are excellent for the environment and look beautiful; they provide oxygen and help absorb carbon, thereby helping reduce the effects of climate change. They also provide life-saving medicines, reduce radiation, and noise, and even make us behave better. Planting trees in your garden can have benefits you never expected.

Here are a few suggestions of trees suitable for the more miniature garden.

Small Garden Trees







Row 1 Left to Right

1. **Acacia baileyana Purpurea**, also known as The Purple Cootamundra Wattle, is a small distinctive evergreen tree with exotic, striking purple and silvery-grey bipinnate delicate foliage. Produces racemes of stunning yellow mimosa flowers in the winter and spring. A very special, unique tree that's easy to care for!
2. **Amelanchier laevis 'R J Hilton'** is a free-flowering cultivar: distinctively pink when in bud opening to large, white flowers, having a stunning contrast to the deep copper-coloured emerging leaves. Blue-black berries follow excellent tints of red and yellow autumn leaf colours. A stunning addition to any garden!
3. **Cercis canadensis 'Hearts of Gold'** Tree has a rounded and slightly spreading shape and boasts purple-red, pea-like flowers on bare branches in the spring. The heart-shaped foliage emerges orange-red, then turns from translucent yellow to yellow green in summer. Leaves at the centre are somewhat darker, creating a striking gradient of colour from mid-green to bright yellow at the edge of the canopy. In autumn, it turns shades of golden yellow.

Row 2 Left to Right

1. **Acer campestre 'Evenley Red'** is a small tree with a rounded crown. It has green foliage, which turns into an exceptional, rich-red colour in the autumn.
2. **Cercis canadensis 'Carolina Sweetheart'**® This lovely redbud has a beautiful umbrella-like growth habit and a deciduous, often multi-trunked understory tree with a rounded crown. Rich maroon leaves unfurl in early spring, eventually becoming green with a white margin. Displays the elegant, broad, heart-shaped leaves expected from a redbud tree.
3. **Toona sinensis "Flamingo"** A slow-growing, large shrub or small tree with handsome large pinnate leaves that are spectacular brilliant pink in spring, turning cream and then green in summer. Old bark peels off in long strips. Fragrant flowers are whitish, borne in dense, drooping panicles in midsummer, followed by winged capsules.

Row 3 Left to Right

1. **Acer x conspicuum 'Phoenix'** is one of the most colourful and brightest Snake bark Maples. *Acer pensylvanicum* 'Erythrocladum' improved form with darker, coral-red winter shoots striped silvery-white and striated bark. Large green leaves turn a golden-yellow in autumn, and small yellow-green flowers appear in spring. A small tree that's relatively slow to grow in its early years. The perfect choice if you're looking for autumn colour and attractive winter bark.
2. **Betula utilis Cinnamon**, a few birches offer such a stunning rich cinnamon-brown bark that is healthy, smooth to the touch with the most attractive horizontal golden lenticel markings. The bark starts to peel at an early age. Resistant to birch rust.
3. **Prunus serrula var. tibetica** (Tibetan Cherry) A particular tree with impressive glistening mahogany peeling bark for all seasons. It is small, vigorous, and upright in its early years, spreading with age, with narrow, willow-like green leaves, turning yellow in autumn, and small, dainty white flowers in April. Good small specimen tree for all situations.

Row 4 Left to Right

1. **Crataegus laevigata' Crimson Cloud'**, a hybrid between 'Charles X' and 'Paul's Scarlet', creates a dense, spreading tree with glossy, dark green foliage. Profuse small single, crimson flowers with creamy centres appear during May; the lightly scented blossom is very popular with bees & butterflies. The flowers later develop into tiny red berries in the autumn, which are great for attracting birds. A very unusual ornamental thorn flowering from an early age.
2. **Sorbus' Leonard Messel'** is a superb, small, oval-shaped tree with upright branches. The winter buds are red, and the leaves are enormous, with many leaflets turning shades of orange, gold and sometimes purple before falling in autumn. Pretty clusters of pink hanging fruit follow the white flowers in late spring and early summer.
3. **Sorbus vilmorinii** is a small, elegant spreading tree with dark green fern-like leaves that turn orange or bronze in autumn. The pink fruit turns white as they age.

“If you wish to make anything grow, you must understand it, and understand it in a very real sense. 'Green fingers' are a fact, and a mystery only to the unpractised. But green fingers are the extensions of a verdant heart.”

— Russell Page, [The Education of a Gardener](#)

The Easiest Way to Make compost – especially if you don't have compost bins

Making compost in an old potting compost bag (also known as anaerobic composting) is a straightforward way to make compost. It's free, requires no tools, and you probably already have all the materials in your home to start making compost bag compost.

Here's what you'll need:

1. Two empty compost bags (don't use bin liners their too thin) 50-75 litre bags are a perfect size.
2. One part of "brown" material (dead leaves, small twigs, wood chips, coffee filters, shredded paper, cardboard or newspaper, straw, old and dried flowers).
3. One part of "green" (fruit and vegetable scraps, grass clippings, tea, and coffee grounds).
4. One part finished compost to get the process going.
5. Water enough to dampen the mixture.

Directions

Put the brown material in first, followed by the green material, and finally the water. Tie off the bag, making sure no air can enter and put it inside the other bag. Secure the second bag, put it in a sunny spot if possible, and get comfortable.

After eight-twelve weeks, check on your bag compost. You'll know your compost is ready to use when it becomes dark, has no remnants of food or waste, and smells like the fresh compost you get at your nursery. It should look like this:



Five tips for making 2022 blooming great

Amberol's managing director, Patience Atkinson-Gregory, offers her view on how Britain in Bloom groups can have a more successful 2022.

As 2021 draws to a close, it's time to look to the future. Everyone reading this newsletter will have had challenges to face during the last 18 months - both individually and within their community. As a planter and litter bin manufacturer working with Britain in Bloom groups across the UK, we have witnessed first-hand how hard you have all worked to maintain that sense of community through the hard work that you do.

And those challenges remain. As the long-term economic impact of the pandemic begins to reveal itself, all consumers - from multinational businesses to voluntary gardening groups - need to prepare themselves for potential supply issues and a changing landscape in terms of restrictions.

Learning from the past

But two advantages that we have over 2020 are knowledge and forewarning. So, what can In Bloomers do to subvert potential problems in 2022?

Planning will be essential. We know many In Bloom groups begin planning for the following year even before the previous summer draws to a close. These groups are now likely to have even more of an advantage over those who leave their planning a little later, especially in sourcing materials from plants to planters. We advise our customers to place their orders as soon as possible while the supply chain remains unpredictable for many sectors, including manufacturers, garden centres, and seed suppliers.



1. **Shop around.** Although inflation was holding steady at the time of writing, the consensus is that prices are likely to rise across a range of areas in 2022, from energy to raw materials. However, there are still good deals to be had, so it pays to shop around. For example, at Amberol, we are **holding our prices at 2020 levels until December 31st**, despite rising production costs. This means that those ordering before 2022 can make significant savings on large orders.
2. **Invest in quality.** It's the age-old dilemma: do I buy cheap and cheerful to reduce costs in the short term or pay more initially and save money long term? We don't pretend that our self-watering planters are the cheapest on the market – but they are the originals, and in our opinion, the best. They certainly offer value for money in terms of durability and longevity. Many customers report that their self-watering planters and litter bins last for two or more decades, making them a sound investment. Items such as Amberol's [Metre Square Planters](#) and [Barrier Baskets](#) are some of our earliest designs – and still going strong in many areas.



3. **The pandemic isn't over.** None of us knows what the winter will bring, and it seems only sensible to continue practising social distancing where possible. By reducing the need for maintenance visits, Amberol's self-watering planters help to ensure that horticultural staff and volunteers remain safely socially distanced. Our range of [Tiered Planters](#), which includes fountain and beehive containers, creates maximum effect for minimal effort and reduces potential contact points. Amberol's [Parade](#) and [Promenade Planters](#) have also proven popular as attractive floral barriers in public places as part of social distancing measures. And, while we all hope such moves won't be needed again, it's advisable to be prepared for all eventualities.

4. **Sources of funding.** There are often alternative ways of funding planting purchases, such as through planter sponsorship. Many In Bloom groups raise money through sponsorship of their floral containers from local businesses. We have produced a [helpful guide](#) with tips and advice on seeking sponsorship specifically for Britain in Bloom groups. Copies are available free on request by emailing sales@amberol.co.uk. Alternatively, why not have a go at entering the Amberol photo competition? Running quarterly throughout the year, the winning photo wins £200 worth of Amberol vouchers to help boost their horticultural coffers. Just submit your entry via the [online form](#) – there's no deadline so that you can submit your images anytime.

How can we help? If you would like to discuss your self-watering planter or litter bin needs or find out more about how we could help your group, please call 01773 830 930, visit www.amberol.co.uk or email sales@amberol.co.uk.