



London in Bloom & South & South East in Bloom

Green Lines

June 2022



Congratulations go to two Bloom Communities receiving the Queen's Award for Volunteering.

Upton in Bloom (Dorset), & Sandown Green Town Volunteers Partnership (IOW).

In congratulating the Team SGTVs Chair, Christine Jackson said, "The award is based on the work done by volunteers over a period of years and is a tribute to the dedication and hard work of all our volunteers since we were formally set up in 2016."

Sue Waters of Upton in Bloom announced

"We have been awarded the Queen's Award for Volunteering – the MBE for volunteer organisations. We are overwhelmed by having this honour bestowed upon us and feel it is a true recognition of the valuable service provided by our dedicated Volunteers, Town Council grounds staff and Committee members.

This is also for all our partners with whom we work together to make Upton a place we can be proud to live and work in."

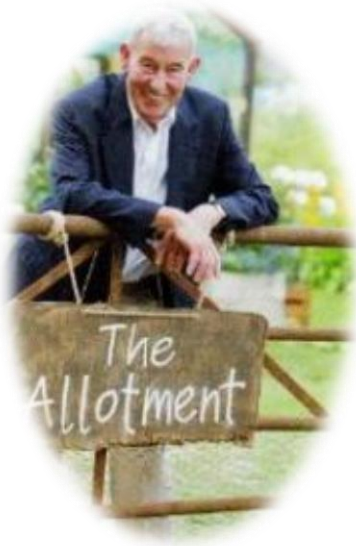
The Trustees of South & South East in Bloom said, "Both communities are model entries in the annual Bloom competition. Without their efforts, their community and the host of volunteers, our regions and communities would not be the thriving, vibrant places they have become. These awards confirm the value Bloom brings to local communities and the regions of the UK in creating attractive places to live, work and visit, with benefits beyond the obvious."

Without a doubt, a much-needed fillip in these interesting times!

Best of luck to all.

Ed.

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



For me, the month of May has been a horticultural bonanza.

Like everybody else, it was great to see the Chelsea Flower Show return to its usual slot. Unfortunately, so did the weather. One minute we were seeking shade from the sun, the next diving for cover to avoid the thunderstorms and torrential rain.

The emphasis on the 13 Show Gardens was on Community, Rewilding and Sustainability.

Most of the Gardens are being rebuilt in permanent locations. This will be a compulsory requirement from next year, which I wholeheartedly endorse.

I applaud the sentiment behind the rewilding theme to the Gardens at this year's Chelsea, but on a personal level would like to see a more balanced approach.

The main discussion throughout the show was the definition of a Show Garden!

A new category of Garden was introduced this year. In the All about Plants Gardens Category, four gardens focused specifically on plants, encouraging everyone to look a little closer and appreciate the colours, textures and forms of flowers and foliage. These are gardens where the plants take centre stage, and the landscaping recedes. In my opinion, the concept was excellent, but on this occasion, the four gardens did not achieve the original brief. I also think they could achieve more outside impact than in the Marquee.

Following the introduction last September of the Container and Balcony Gardens on Royal Hospital Way, which proved confusing for visitors. This year they were situated on the Triangle at the end of Main Avenue.

Unlike last year the visitors looked through the apartment to the display, which proved very popular.

The Peoples Choice Garden was won by the Perennial Garden 'With Love', which only received a silver medal from the judges!!

I was absolutely delighted that the entry by the London Fire Brigade received a silver-gilt medal in the Discovery Zone. The reactions and comments from the visitors were very encouraging.

I can see the entries in this year's London Garden Societies Fire Brigade competition increasing considerably.

I was delighted that the Royal Horticultural Society paid tribute to Peter Seabrook with two exhibits in the Marquee celebrating his passion for plants.

Although the Marquee was very colourful and most of the Exhibitors focused on plants rather than props, there are still extensive walkways and plenty of space between each exhibit. The major problem is the cost of putting on a display at Chelsea, accommodation, parking, congestion charges etc.

I believe the opportunity to provide the Exhibitors with more storage space for plants to sell should be pursued particularly with all the unused areas at the moment. It would provide additional financial support and, more importantly, very satisfied visitors.

I chaired the panel that judged all the cut flower exhibits. As of this year, the use of oasis is not allowed which everyone accepts is the right decision.

However, the alternative product, AGRA wool, has created major problems for the exhibitors. In many cases, the plants did not accept the water. They were also restricted in the size of the display vases.

Many of the Exhibitors had gone back to using either paper or chicken wire!

The highlight of the Show for me was after a very long judging day on Monday as we were about to leave for some well-earned refreshment from the Hospital Road exit, the police shut all the gates to allow the Queen to arrive.

She looked absolutely radiant as she set off in her buggy. Apparently, she sat behind her driver, and as it went up and down the gangways, she tapped him on the shoulder when she wanted him to stop. The Exhibitors then walked towards the buggy.

At the end of the day it was great to be back in May at the greatest Flower Show in the World.

I was also fortunate to judge the Kent Garden Show at Detling on the Friday of Chelsea week which ran for 3 days and attracted 30,000 visitors who were able to buy all the plants they had seen on the TV during the Gardeners World coverage.

I then drove to a school in Croydon at which the children create their own Chelsea Garden in a variety of containers. This was my 17th year and there were 59 entries.

The imagination of the children never ceases to amaze me.

One of the lads, who obviously had no interest in gardening, had created a football pitch with cut-out players in their team colours. At one end he had made a scoreboard.

Liverpool 7 Crystal Palace 0.

Finally, I judged the ' Bloom Show at the end of month

This takes place at Phoenix Park in Dublin. The show attracts 100,000 people over 5 days.

As I said, what a month!

Keep smiling, keep safe and keep gardening. Best wishes for a blooming year- Jim

GARDENING TIPS & TASKS for July

Reg Leach - SSEiB Judge & Ambassador & Parks Manager – retired.

Welcome to the June bulletin with Gardening' Tasks and Tips' for July. Now is the time of year to take time out, enjoy the benefits of all your hard work, and begin reviewing your garden.

As always, here are some things to do this month...

BASKETS, TROUGHS & POTS

Regularly water and feed plants in baskets and containers. Containerized plants will become increasingly pot-bound as the summer progresses and need extra feed unless you can pot them on into larger containers.

BEDDING

If you sowed Bellis, Myosotis, Polyanthus and Wallflowers earlier in the year into open ground, they would need thinning out now to allow them to grow into a good size before planting out later, after the summer bedding has been finished flowering and is removed - usually around early October.

If you didn't review last spring, now is also an excellent time to start thinking about the following winter/spring display - looking back at the best and the not so good of last spring and adjusting your plans accordingly.

BIRDS, BEES & BUTTERFLIES

Continue topping up bird feeders and water bowls for birds during summer. As part of your future planning (see below), consider increasing the number of plants that attract wildlife and consider early flowering species that emerging bees in the spring (mainly solitary bees) can benefit from.

BLOOM THOUGHTS

Check those tucked-away corners of the garden for dead leaves and clear them away. Check under baskets for weeds; they thrive under dripping baskets.

If you have been judged by now, take time to review your entry, looking at what did well and what could be improved for next year.

BULBS

Now is an excellent time to decide on spring-flowering bulbs, for new schemes, enhance existing schemes, or expand on existing bulb areas.

CLIMBERS

Continue to deadhead flowering climbers, particularly roses, and manage new growth by tying in to extend their coverage of the wall/fence or removing new shoots to maintain their size and shape.

GLASSHOUSES & TENDER PLANTS

As mentioned last month, where possible, bring out potted plants for a few months before returning them to the glasshouse in the early autumn.

HEDGES

To maintain hedges at their best, trim lightly and regularly but avoid cutting back too hard into the older brown wood. Check underneath for weeds and litter. As with large shrubs, check for birds nesting and leave any pruning until the young have fledged the nest. Be aware that birds may have a second nesting season!



HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS

Regularly check herbaceous plants, summer flowering bulbs and standard bedding plants for staking and trying to avoid wind damage. Deadhead regularly keeps them flowering and takes out old flowering stems of Delphinium and Lupin, as they can often have a second flush. Suppose you have lavender, harvest and dry for bagging up and using indoors. If your herbaceous plants are becoming too large for their space, make a note to lift and divide later in the year.

HOLIDAYS AWAY

If you are going to be away this summer for any period, even if just for a few days, there are a number of things you can do to minimize plant loss through lack of water whilst away.

Firstly ask a friend, neighbour or relative to look after your garden. If you can't do this, plants that are most vulnerable to drying out in beds and borders should be well watered, and their base then mulched to trap moisture around their roots – it's a good idea to lightly fork the bed carefully before watering, so the water is more easily

absorbed into the soil, rather than run off.

Move containers and pots, if possible, to a shadier spot while you're away. Dunk planted pots into the water for a few minutes, so the roots at the centre of the pot become well wetted – giving the maximum period before they dry out and sit pots in saucers to catch any rain to help them last until your return.

If you have tender pot plants such as Coleus, ornamental/zonal Geraniums (the old-fashioned ones that are grown for their leaf colour more than their flowers) and Chlorophytum, plunge them, still in their pots, into any gaps in the borders, constantly watering in well. They will survive better while you are away on holiday, as their roots can expand out of the bottom of the pot into the soil beneath. These plants can then be lifted at the end of the season, put back into the

greenhouse, and, if required, pot on into bigger pots. When you're back from your trip, take cuttings of them to overwinter, to maintain and increase your stock.

LAWNS

Feed regularly to keep a green turf and water well afterwards, using water from a water butt if you have one. If we are experiencing hot, dry weather this month, hold off feeding, as the lawn may get scorched.

If you are struggling with a mossy lawn, it's likely to be compacted and therefore not draining well, or the lawn is in too much heavy shade. Make a note to de-compact in the autumn using a hand fork to allow air in and lightly dress with an excellent fine loam, mixed with grass seed and brush in.

Alternatively, reduce the area of lawn in the shade and create or extend the patio, or create a shade border using plants that survive well without too much sun, with a collection of Astringia, Euphorbias, Hellebores or Hosta's.

PATHS, PAVEMENTS & HARD SURFACES

Keep paths clear of weeds, moss and algae and check on hanging baskets above so that they are not getting too long or are obscuring road signs.

PESTS & DISEASES

Regularly inspect plants for aphids, blackflies, black spots, and mildew and treat, as necessary. Continue searching out slugs and snails.

Use any chemicals sparingly (if at all) and always read the label before applying. Consider nematodes were appropriate for the future as a pest control.

PLANNING & REVIEWING

During the summer, while it's looking its best, it's an excellent time to review your garden and completed projects.

Draw up a list of improvements that can be tackled this autumn/winter, noting what is doing well and what is not doing so well.

Are there taller plants in front of smaller ones that are lost at the back of the border; you may have colour clashes that do not work; there may be a dominating shrub that swamps everything else out; or you may have a tree that casts a heavy shadow over plants beneath, that need full sun so are struggling? Consider whether your herbaceous perennials are becoming too large for their space. They can be lifted and divided in the dormant season.



Review the current summer bedding schemes and consider changes and improvements for next year.

Now is also an excellent time to consider reducing the amount of formal bedding you may have and changing it for more sustainable perennials.

Also, consider whether to reduce the amount of more 'formal' lawns and create a wildflower meadow instead, which will benefit wildlife, look colourful, and be great for children.

Take photos of your garden to use as a reminder later in the year when finalizing next year's scheme for your garden or community project.

ROSES

Cut out rose suckers coming from the base, as they will weaken the plant. Regularly deadhead all roses to keep them flowering throughout the summer. Feed regularly to help encourage repeat flowering and maintain vigorous, healthy plants that will be more resistant to pests and diseases.



SEED SOWING / CUTTINGS

Although it's getting late, there is still time to sow spring bedding plants such as Bellis, Myosotis, Polyanthus, Wallflowers, and winter Pansies and consider what bulbs to plant with them, bearing in mind the ultimate height of the bulb, which varies immensely by the time they flower, especially Tulips.

Take cuttings of tender plants for overwintering indoors.

SHRUBS

Cut out the more vigorous green shoots from reverting variegated shrubs, e.g. Spiraea, Elaeagnus, Euonymus.

As a principle of pruning, cut back shrubs as soon as they have flowered to encourage new growth for next year's flowers. This will also keep the shrub's size in check. Always check large shrubs before pruning as you would hedge for bird nesting and if in evidence, leave until the young have fledged.

TREES

Keep newly planted trees on your watering schedule and check their ties, reducing the tightness accordingly as the trunk's circumference will increase as they mature.

WATERING

As part of your future planning, review the waterbutt situation. If, like me, you have a large waterbutt to collect rainwater, but it was quickly emptied during the dry period in late April and early May, consider linking up more water butts to the main one as an overflow so that you can store more winter rains. Kits to do this are readily available and allow the rainwater, once the first waterbutt has filled up, to overflow and run into the next waterbutt. Also, consider more water collection from outbuildings, garages, and sheds. Using rainwater to water in dry spells is much better than mains tap water, especially when many of us are now metered!

If you water baskets and troughs around your village or community, encourage shopkeepers on your route to install water butts so you can utilize them next summer on your rounds.

WEEDING

Maintain regular hoeing of beds and borders to prevent emerging weeds from flowering. Leave on the surface to dry off if the weather is hot.

Next month I'll put together a list of flowering plants that benefit bees and butterflies throughout the year.

Until next month, enjoy your garden and, with luck, summer sunshine.

Reg





Bloom Judge and Ambassador Derek Beer seeks a new transport option for getting around his judging assignments!

Derek, a transport "Buff" who is interested in public transportation across the region, is working with Rail Partnerships to encourage more Stations and Station Gardening groups to get involved.

Thanks, Derek

My favourite Garden Plant, at the moment

Cornus Kousa chinensis



Ed.

Bloom Sponsors South & South East in Bloom



It's no secret that creating a beautiful garden or growing

your vegetables takes time, dedication, and passion. There is always something new to get excited about and pay attention to with the ever-changing seasons. At **The Garden Superstore**, we understand what your garden means to you. We are passionate about sharing our expert, in-depth knowledge to help you on your gardening journey, from quality gardening calendars to product reviews and helpful guides to help your garden look its best all year round.

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Amberol joins S&SEIB & London again in 2022

Our business's heart is a desire to make *a visual difference*. This includes stunning floral arrangements in calm, peaceful villages and fast-paced city environments and keeping Britain tidy through our wide range of bin products. We believe that conversation and collaboration are essential to offer the best solutions for our

customers. Collaborating closely with our customers, we offer tailored advice and free demonstrations to ensure they make the right decisions.

John O'Connor Grounds Maintenance Contractor provides support again in 2022

John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance employs over five hundred staff and manages over 250 vehicles across the UK, providing complete landscape solutions to a range of sectors, including commercial and local authorities. The Company has always been mindful of its business's impact on the environment.



London in Bloom donors



London in Bloom is grateful for the continuing support of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association, which has provided a grant to London in Bloom for 2022

MPGA is a long-established Charity that has played a vital role in preserving and improving countless gardens, neglected sites, and green open spaces across London. We provide modest grants to those who share with us a desire to improve the environment and thus the quality of life for the local community. Our work brings us into contact with various groups, including local councils, schools, hospitals, hospices, museums, voluntary organizations, and community groups.

The Worshipful Company of Gardeners, first mentioned in City Corporation records in 1345, is a survivor of the medieval craft guilds which exercised control over the practice of their particular crafts and ensured proper training through the system of apprenticeship.

The Company is a "living" guild, and the numbers of its members are both professionals and amateurs actively involved in the craft. All are united by a common bond of horticulture and gardens.



The Worshipful Company of
GARDENERS



Windowflowers is an independent family-owned and managed horticultural nursery, supplying and maintaining the finest floral and plant displays to businesses and local

authorities for over 70 years. Based in the West of London, they grow over one million plants and import over half a million stems of cut flowers and plants each year to their nursery. They have a team of eighty trained horticulturalists, nurserymen and florists working out of over thirty vehicles to ensure that your displays are always healthy, neat, and colourful.



London and South & South East in Bloom rely on sponsors and donors to help us deliver our annual programs and provide opportunities for all our entries and participants. We have a range of opportunities to engage with our regions, from budget-friendly schemes to the more elaborate. So if you know anyone who can help or donate, please let us know.