

HARROGATE IN BLOOM

2023



HARROGATE IN BLOOM MEMBERS

Harrogate in Bloom is an independent organisation, founded in 1989, to promote and improve the floral image and beauty of Harrogate. In 2015 the members of Harrogate in Bloom realised that more community effort was required to progress in the 'in bloom' bid and so formed Team Harrogate inviting all the volunteer horticultural and environmental organisations to join. This served to enhance the town's entry in the 'in bloom' competitions and all were entered as Team Harrogate. In 2021 the Harrogate BID joined the group and provided an injection of enthusiasm for Team Harrogate to move forward. However, earlier this year the group decided to revert back to the original 'Harrogate in Bloom'!

There has always been a good working relationship between the local council and the volunteer groups, and this has been further enhanced since North Yorkshire Council took responsibility for Harrogate.

Harrogate in Bloom Members are:

- Harrogate in Bloom
- North Yorkshire Council
- Harrogate Business Improvement District
- Harrogate Chamber of Commerce
- Friends of Valley Gardens
- Friends of RHS Harlow Carr
- Pinewoods Conservation Group
- Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Group
- North of England Horticultural Society (Harrogate Flower Shows)
- Harrogate and District Allotment Federation
- Bilton Conservation Group BCG
- Harrogate Civic Society
- Horticap
- Rossett Nature Reserve
- Hookstone and Stonefall Action Group
- Bachelor's Field Friends Group
- Woodlands Community Garden
- Stray Defence Association



Harrogate's floral excellence has been renowned for decades and has truly put Harrogate on the map.

HARROGATE IN BLOOM COMPETITIONS (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

Throughout the year we run a number of competitions to recognise endeavour and to encourage more involvement.

Harrogate in Bloom Awards 2023

The categories are:

- Hotels and Guest Houses
- Pubs and Restaurants
- Communal grounds
- Residential Community
- Shop windows
- School Gardens



Points will be awarded for:

- First Impression/ overall design
- Planting appropriate in colour/scale with summer interest
- Containers appropriate size and style
- Paving, paths, fabric well maintained/ signage in good order.
- Plants in good condition/disease free/dead headed.
- Noticeable environmental features and/or residents' involvement.

SCHOOLS COMPETITION – HAPPY HARROGATE (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B3, C1,C3)



The inspiration for this flowerbed was from designs by local school children as part of Harrogate in Bloom's schools' competition. Designs were received from Charlotte Collyer, Sofia Bolton and Noah of Oatlands Junior School along with Ava Ulyett and George Barrat of Brackenfield School. The theme was 'Happy Harrogate'. The colours have been changed slightly due to the availability of seasonal plants. Listed here are the plants on display: Begonia Non-Stop Fire – approx. 1700 plants Begonia Non-Stop Yellow – approx. 1550 plants Begonia Non -top Red – approx. 400 plants Coleus Juliet Quartermain – approx. 25 plants.

HARROGATE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

(A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

Harrogate Business Improvement District has planned a second Floral Summer of Celebration, this year focussed on Harrogate's international connections around the world, which was unveiled at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show 20 -23 April. Nine floral displays will celebrate Harrogate's international connections.



Harrogate BID recognises the importance of Harrogate's floral offer and history of success with Britain and Yorkshire in Bloom. They fund over 160 additional floral displays to add to the floral offering in the town which include barrier baskets that are provided by North Yorkshire Council and are replaced twice year in time for Summer and Autumn. They also provide additional floral planters outside businesses in the town centre. Wall murals have been painted to bring art and creativity to some of the areas of the town that need it most.

These initiatives really add to those great first impressions of the town.



HOOKSTONE AND STONEFALL ACTION GROUP (HASAG) (B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

Hookstone and Stonefall Action Group is a group of volunteers who assist the Local Authority to enhance and maintain two areas of public open space – Hookstone Wood and Stonefall Park.

In late March/ early April 2023, the group was very busy surfacing footpaths through Hookstone Woods with the help of Open Country, Shirelle Hawkins from NYC and lots of local volunteers.

A team from Open Country did a huge amount of the wheeling and levelling of the stone on a long length of paths. The work was co-ordinated by Shirelle Hawkins from North Yorkshire Council and many other volunteers including local residents and members of Starbeck in Bloom helped with the task. The materials were purchased with funds from a local ward councillor through his local ward budgets. Feedback from visitors to the woods has been very positive.



Hookstone Woods Paths

by HASAG / HBC / Open Country

444 m length x 1.5m wide = 666 sq. m

Barrowed over 560m length x 3

3 barrows per m.

Approximately 4 kilometres walked.



A group of HASAG members also had a workday to control Himalayan Balsam and clear paths in Panhandle Park in June.

FRIENDS OF RHS HARLOW CARR (C1,C3)

The Friends of Harlow Carr have 100 members who fundraise for the gardens mainly by giving guided walks of the garden. During the last 21 years these walks have raised £46,000 all of which has been spent on projects for the garden. The Glasshouse in the Sub Tropicana Garden was given by the Friends and the family of a member.

Activities this year include:

- A spring and autumn ecology walk,
- A Summer evening walk with the Curator,
- A visit to Renishaw Hall in August.



FRIENDS OF VALLEY GARDENS (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

The Friends of Valley Gardens have a team of volunteer gardeners who work a half day on alternate Wednesday mornings, mainly in the areas that the Friends have restored.

They link up with the Yorkshire & Humber region of the Japanese Garden Society to have biannual workshop days in the Japanese Garden which has helped to tackle the Japanese style of pruning, make a bamboo fence etc.

They also link up with RSPB and Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Group with the bird boxes.



FRIENDS OF VALLEY GARDENS & NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)



The **New Zealand Garden** was created in 1953 to honour the 23 New Zealand aircrew buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery with plants donated by the City of Wellington.

Since May 1978, the connection between Harrogate and Wellington has formalized as a "sister city" relationship.

In 2010, plantsman Tony Sissons led a team to restore the garden thanks to a bequest from Kenneth Broadwith. The Maori Pou Whenua, donated by the City of Wellington, and three New Zealand statues carved from leylandii stumps were created.



By 2023 the statues needed to be replaced. Thanks to a generous legacy donation from the late Alan Rollinson and North Yorkshire Council, Harrogate International Partnerships commissioned the Yorkshire sculptor Jennifer Tetlow to create the Yorkshire Stone Pikorua sculpture, a symbol from New Zealand that represents an eternal bond between people and cultures.

The City of Wellington has donated a bench and Sue Wood and the Valley Gardens Professional Gardeners have restored the garden with donations from the family of the late Tony Sissons.



STRAY DEFENCE ASSOCIATION

(A3, A4, B1,B2,B3, C1)



Wrapped around the very centre of the town the 200 acres of the Stray are an intrinsic and unique part of what makes Harrogate special.

For 89 years The Stray Defence Association has safeguarded Harrogate's Stray against building and encroachment from all quarters and upheld the Act granting freedom of the Stray to all people for all time.

A ramshackle red phone box in Harrogate has been moved and transformed into a history of the Stray.

The disused phone box on the Stray, just off Otley Road, had fallen into a dilapidated state.

So the SDA, which safeguards the 200 acres of parkland against building and encroachment, hired a specialist renovation company to uplift it on 16 March 2023.

It was restored to its original bright scarlet and moved to a more prominent town centre spot on West Park Stray, where it stood beneath a white cover for several days.

Its old position on the Stray, next to Otley Road, has been restored and reseeded to return it to Stray land.



Cordelia, 7, and Harry, 5, performed the opening by cutting a ribbon to highlight how children are the future custodians of the Stray.

The new-look phone box has panels displaying the history of Harrogate's Stray and the Stray Defence Association.

Judy D'Arcy Thompson, chairman of the Stray Defence Association, said:

"It is the Stray Defence Association's hope that it will become a valued part of the West Park street scene and an intriguing and iconic information source for both local people and visitors to Harrogate."

The unveiling, which was attended by members of the Stray Defence Association, Harrogate in Bloom and Harrogate Civic Society, coincided with the 90th anniversary of the Stray Defence Association, which was formed on May 12, 1933.

CORONATION CELEBRATIONS (A1,A2,A3,A4,)

To celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort in May 2023, North Yorkshire Council planted carpet bedding at Montpellier Hill in Harrogate. The plants on display here are specific plants for carpet bedding schemes which are mostly foliage to create the design: Ajuga Braun Herz, Helichrysum White Wonder, Sedum Gold Mound, Sedum Reflexum Gecko, Sedum Reflexum Yellow Cushion, Sedum Spurium Variegatum, Sempervivum Arachnoideum.



HARROGATE CIVIC SOCIETY (B3,C1,C2,C3)

Harrogate Civic Society was established in 1971 and is committed to celebrating the town's architectural and social history, to contributing to discussions about how the town is developed, and to ensuring that Harrogate both retains the best of its historic character and embraces the future. Currently HCS is involved in discussions on:

- The Station Gateway Project
- The Redevelopment of the former Council Offices in Crescent Gardens
- The proposed new Harrogate Town Council

The Society is also responsible for installing many of the 93 Brown Plaques which celebrate the history, important events and people in the town. The majority of the plaques are within a one-mile radius of the town centre. Seven walking trails allow residents and visitors to explore the history of the town through the plaques.

In 2023, in collaboration with Harrogate Film Society and the Yorkshire Film archive, HCS organised four screenings of "Harrogate on Film" at the Odeon Cinema, which was very well received. Two more screenings are planned.

HCS is also supporting the centenary celebration project for the Harrogate War Memorial.



HARROGATE FLOWER SHOWS (C1,C2,C3)

Established in 1911, the North of England Horticultural Society is an independent charity dedicated to the support and promotion of horticulture across the north. The society stages the prestigious twice-yearly Harrogate Flower Show as a key element of its work in bringing together people and organisations to share and engage in the benefits of horticulture.



Each year Pam Grant, a volunteer council member of Harrogate Flower Shows, organises a Charity Breakfast at the Spring Flower Show. This includes VIP parking, early admission to the Flower Halls, breakfast along with a short presentation on the supported charity. In 2022 just over £2000 was raised for Prostate Cancer UK and this year £2850 was raised for Dementia Forward. In 2024 the Charity Breakfast will be in aid of Harrogate in Bloom.,

ROSSETT NATURE RESERVE (A3, A4, B2, C1, C3)

This small urban nature reserve is located off a 400-metre-long section of Rossett Drive, adjoining Richmond Avenue. There are several small ponds, along with some scrub and some grassland. It is a site of special scientific interest and now also has Nature Reserve status from Natural England due to a breeding colony of Great Crested Newts.

The Rossett Local Nature Reserve committee look after the area, organising volunteer days for litter picking and conservation work. They also provide educational sessions on pond life and newts on site for local schools, uniformed groups and the local community. In 2022, they were accepted onto an exciting research project for the control of an invasive pond weed, crassula, with crassula mites.

Attractive information boards provide details on the wildlife that can be seen.



HARROGATE & DISTRICT ALLOTMENT FEDERATION

(A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

The Harrogate & District Allotment Federation brings together the allotment sites across the district to share ideas and good practice and to showcase their gardening successes at the annual Allotment Show. There are 6 self-managed sites in Harrogate and one managed by the Council.

The 61st Allotment Show was held on 21st August 2022. £500 from the Show was donated to Woodlands Community Garden to provide new information boards for the garden. Surplus produce from the Show went to Resurrected Bites, a community organisation aiming to reduce food waste and food poverty.

The 62nd Show will be held on 20th August 2023 with profits from the Show going to Ripon in Bloom to support the re-planting of Bedern Bank.

Individual sites also hold community events and fund-raising activities.

Pine Street Allotments held their annual Open Day on 31st July 2022. There was a wonderful atmosphere enhanced by local band, with produce, plants, books, cakes, tombola, refreshments, tools and crafts stalls. They raised £1500, which was divided between St Michael's Hospice and Dementia Forward. In May, they also had a table-top sale which raised £310 which will be added to the funds raised from this year's Open Day on 30th July with all proceeds going to Harrogate Homeless Project

Unity Grove Allotments are holding their first ever Open Day on 29th July with all proceeds going to Macmillan Cancer Support.



For the last few years, Harlow Hill Allotments have donated their surplus produce on a weekly basis to Resurrected Bites. Harlow Hill held an Open Day on 3rd June 2023 with a plant sale, cake stall and children's activities and raised £700 for Harrogate Food Bank and Resurrected Bites.

In May, Oatlands Allotments held a scarecrow competition. Plot holders were given a free-hand to come up with their own innovative ideas.

Sandra Griffiths from Oatlands regularly goes to the Women's Refuge in Harrogate to work in the garden with their residents.

HARROGATE HOSPITAL & COMMUNITY CHARITY (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3)

Harrogate District Hospital has some 27 internal courtyards of varying sizes, and a large area of tree and shrub covered estate around the hospital. Much of the estate borders the Stray and benefits from the trees and open aspect.

The whole hospital is undergoing an asbestos removal, window replacement and refurbishment programme which has seen many of the courtyards locked and turned into scaffolding and building supplies stores, but they will be restored when the contractors leave.

HHCC, the Hospital charity, has had government funding to be used to improve the happiness and wellbeing of staff and patients, and this has been used to put seating, covered pods, a gazebo, and planting around the hospital.

A new gazebo outside the Sir Robert Ogden Macmillan Centre has been described as a new outdoor office and cafe for staff, and newly planted areas around the unit are lovely for patients to look at while undergoing chemotherapy.

The Barrells courtyard with fruit and veg growing in raised beds has reopened now the contractors have left that area, creating a welcoming seating area near the Heriots restaurant.

Two full time gardening staff members have been employed to look after the estate and support the gardening volunteer, and a second volunteer has recently joined.

HARROGATE BIODIVERSITY ACTION GROUP (C1,C3)

Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Group (HDBAG) is a group of individuals, organisations and businesses who wish to help local wildlife in the district. By sharing ideas and information they aim to support the community to make small changes which will make a big difference. They do this:

- by organising practical activities to encourage people of all ages and skills to make these changes and
- by acting as a conduit for information on environmental activities between all the other local groups.

HORTICAP (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

Located at Bluecoat Wood Nurseries, Otley Road in Harrogate, Horticap is an independent, registered charity which provides adults with learning and other disabilities training in horticulture, allied crafts and rural skills.

Thanks to a generous donation, they have recently revamped their Nature Trail, which aims to emphasise the importance of sustainability and our precious ecosystem.

Horticap regularly enter displays at the Great Yorkshire Show and the Harrogate Flower Shows - always winning awards for their efforts.

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY GARDEN (A1,A2,A3,A4, B1,B2,B3, C1,C2,C3)

Woodlands Community Garden can be found behind the Woodlands Methodist Church on Wetherby Road, Harrogate. In 2013, it was a large, grassed space, which has been turned into a community garden for local residents and community groups.

The garden started with 2 raised beds, which were used to grow vegetables and in September 2014, local groups Foresight and Fairfax Community Centre enjoyed a shared meal cooked from the produce in the garden.

With a grant from RHS, help from garden designer, Marco Schrang, and more fundraising, a beautiful garden has now been developed, which consists of a veg garden, an orchard of apple trees, a sensory garden, a children's area, a grassy space to play and wildlife margins; a pizza oven, water feature and mosaic area were all built by the community at community events; and a pond and wildlife area are currently under construction with 16 – 18 year olds under community service orders helping to dig the pond.

This is a truly community space involving lots of community groups in many different events and providing healthy food for the local community.



PINEWOODS CONSERVATION GROUP (A4, B1, B2)

The Pinewoods Conservation Group aims to promote the maintenance and conservation of the environment within the Pinewoods, which is approximately 96 acres of semi natural woodland, one kilometre south-west of Harrogate town centre. They work with a range of local community groups, for example:

- The group took part in the Great British Spring Clean.
- Local schools & youth groups carried out litter picks and balsam bashes.
- Supporting local businesses with staff volunteering days.

The Council's Parks and Environmental Services team carries out most of the planting in the public spaces in Harrogate. The planting consists of traditional bedding schemes, sustainable permanent planting, pollinator-friendly and wildflower areas. The type of planting depends on the location and maintenance required.

There is no local government funding directly for 'in bloom' but North Yorkshire Council is an advocate of the benefits of 'in bloom', particularly in recent years as voluntary groups such as those making up Harrogate in Bloom can help counter the effects of a reduction in resources that local government can offer.

One of the Council's corporate priorities is to be successful in the regional and national 'in bloom' awards. To that end the council's Parks and Environmental Services Team offers support to the district's In Bloom groups which includes a subsidised hanging basket scheme, administration, design and print, along with advice, guidance and attendance at meetings.

The Council's Parks and Environmental Services team are responsible for:

- 6 major parks
- 391 hectares of parks and open space
- 11 cemeteries and one crematorium
- 65 hectares of managed woodland
- Manage approximately 6000 trees on highways and in parks.
- Annual tree planting including White Rose Forest (approx. 16000) and Queen's Green Canopy (98)
- Over 1000 Tree Protection Orders
- 38,000,000 sq. m of amenity grass
- Over 60 children's play areas, skate parks and ball courts
- 3000 km of road are swept and cleaned across the district.
- 10 allotment sites and 4 beehives
- Events and markets

Parks and Environmental Services have been working hard to help make a difference to the environment, making gradual changes throughout the service. Some changes such as using peat free compost, using recycled plant pots/trays and recycling Christmas trees which were originally sold at the Horticultural Nursery and returned for recycling afterwards. Some wildflower growing trials, also leaving some areas to grow longer attracting insect pollinators and now have four beehives too. They have been planting trees in conjunction with the White Rose Forest, the Queen's Green Canopy and continued succession planting. They have organised a number of volunteer tree planting days including some young trees which have been grown by volunteers. Due to the warmer climate, they are using hydration bags on some young trees, and monitoring the results for future use. They have 100 hydration bags which hold 70 litres of water which releases gradually over a few days. Ongoing upgrade of more environmentally friendly vehicles, using more electric or battery-operated equivalents where possible.



Using peat free compost



Using recycled pots and trays



Recycling Christmas trees



Wildflower growing trials



Leaving wildflower areas



4 x beehives



Electric street cleaning machine



Battery operated equipment



Tree planting for QGC



Volunteer tree planting days



Saplings grown by volunteers



Hydration bags for young trees