



South & South East & London in Bloom

Green Lines

February



Following on from our “year of yes” front page in the January newsletter, we thought it would be right to celebrate our new bloom family members and those returning to us after a break. So far, we have had 41 new/returning entrants, 17 in S&SEIB & 24 in LIB, which is fantastic!

We have also had enquires from other new groups, so we want to remind them that the last few years have taught us to just jump in with both feet! So, this year is as good as any to join the Bloom movement and get that entry form in!

A reminder to anyone that has not already submitted their entry from, the closing date for non desktop (Main Entries, Parks, Our Communities & IYN's) entries is Monday 28th February, the Environmental Challenge entry deadline is 30 April and the Schools Environmental Challenge and all other desktop entries is 31st March.

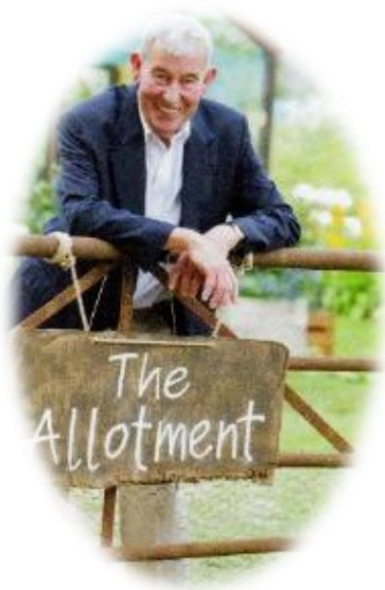
So, the moral of the story is, if you are contemplating getting involved, then just do it and if you have forgotten to send your entry in or just have not got round to it yet, the same message applies, just do it!

We are here to support and answer questions, so use the year of yes and get involved!

Kate & Anne



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



Following the recent storms, I started to reminisce about my involvement in the Great Storm in 1987 when I was the Superintendent at Greenwich Park. In those days, storms were not given names, and nobody was expecting a storm, least of all Michael Fish at the Met Office. When a woman rang the BBC and said she'd heard there was a hurricane on the way, he replied, "well, if you're watching, don't worry, there isn't one".

The Royal Parks Constabulary had two officers on night duty. One of them had to go home as a tree had caused considerable damage to his house. The remaining WPC spent a considerable amount of time trying to get an answer on the phone and finally achieved success in waking me up by throwing a stone at my bedroom window.

In hindsight, we did a very silly thing as we attempted to drive around the park in the police car. Well we didn't have to drive very far. There were roof tiles, estate agents' boards and park benches flying around in all directions. The noise was deafening. Large trees were lying on their sides with their roots out of the ground. At first light, I rang up about twelve of my most reliable staff and asked them to come to work as soon as possible. There were no guidelines on a situation like this, and we would have to create our own plan. The first decision was not to open the park to through traffic or the general public. As well as the park, I was also responsible for the Royal Naval College and the National Maritime Museum, which had both

suffered from the storm. In all, we lost over 250 trees. The first problem we had to overcome was returning the deer into their enclosure as, unfortunately, a tree had fallen across the deer fence. They all escaped into the flower garden, which was only protected by a 5-foot fence around the perimeter. I used to "say, if you can put it a saddle on a deer, it could win the Grand National." The staff who fed the deer came up with a brilliant idea. We spread out a year's supply of dairy nuts in a trail into the enclosure; they managed to attract their attention by shaking a bucket containing food. Once they picked up the trail, we could slowly walk behind, and unbelievably, we got them back into the enclosure and repaired the broken fence.

The next priority was to send a staff member to the place where we purchased our chainsaws, protective clothing, light chains, and fuel. Normally, all of these items would have been tended for each year. To his credit he reminded me that I exceeded my spending remit! When he returned with everything on my list, I had already worked out a plan to tackle the damage. I divided the staff into teams and concentrated on clearing the fallen trees in the Car Parks and the main road through the park and the pedestrian gate entrances. As the park was closed to the public, we had some very large bonfires. It was a tremendous team effort that took two weeks to complete. It was hard work but rewarding to know we had achieved it ourselves. There were several amusing tales. The first one was on the first weekend the park was closed when a very irate regular created a security issue at the main entrance gate, The park police were concerned that a crowd had gathered and supported his request to enter the park. I was asked to try and placate him, which I realized would not happen. As I turned away, he grabbed hold of my arm and said that if the trees had been planted deep enough, in the first place this would not have happened. When the park was finally opened, just in case, we had missed any damaged branches, we produced a big sign at the entrance saying beware, dangerous trees. Someone wrote underneath, "do not feed."

Finally, you may recall that I had exceeded my spending allowance for machinery purchases and a year's supply of dairy nuts. This resulted in me having to attend several meetings with the audit department. The outcome was I was given a severe reprimand and a written warning and was advised to attend a management course on accountability.....

Happy days

Keep smiling, Keep safe, Keep Gardening – Jim

Sponsor News

Thanks to our South & South East in Bloom sponsors so far this year.



DS Smith Redefining Packaging for a Changing World:

We always keep an eye on the future, as we are operating in a changing world. Towns, cities, and entire populations are rapidly transforming. The growth in digital technology is revolutionising the way we shop and live. We increasingly expect to purchase products tailored for us, whenever we want them, wherever we want them, delivered to us in a way that fits our busy lifestyles. We want more choice and convenience but with less impact on the world around us.



Amberol joins S&SEIB & London again in 2022

At the heart of our business is a desire to make *a visual difference*. This includes stunning floral arrangements in calm peaceful villages and fast-paced city environments alike and keeping Britain tidy through our wide range of bin products. We believe that to offer the best solutions for our customers, conversation and collaboration are key. 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'Connor Grounds Maintenance employs over 500 staff and manages over 250 vehicles across the UK, providing complete landscape solutions to a range of sectors, including commercial and local authority. The Company has always been mindful of the impact its business has on the environment.

London in Bloom is grateful for the continuing support of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association provide a grant to London in Bloom for 2022



MPGA is a long-established Charity which over the years has played a vital role in the preservation and improvement of 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 a wide variety of groups, including local councils, schools, hospitals, hospices, museums, voluntary organisations and community groups.

Both 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 of anyone who can help or donate, please let us know.

Card Payments

We are pleased to announce that we are able to take credit & debit card payments now. So if you would like to pay for your entry fee or a place at a seminar or awards, please contact Anne or Kate at the usual email addresses.

Ruths New Year Quiz – The Gardening Year Answers:

January: Chitting

February: Christmas Rose or Lenten Rose

March: St David's Day (March 1) - Daffodil or Leek, St Patrick's Day (March 17) – Shamrock or Sweet Pea

April: Hazel

May: Tagetes, borage, nasturtiums

June: Bolting

July: Tradition says that if it rains on St Swithin's Day it will rain for the next 40 days

August: Layering

September: Trumpet

October: The record was set by Stephano Cutrupi in Italy in September 2021 with an impressive 1,226 Kg (2,703 lb)

November: To protect them from damage by pests specifically the winter moth caterpillar.

December: Amaryllis

GARDENING TIPS & TASKS for March

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

Now the evenings are lengthening; we are increasingly drawn outside working in the garden or within our community groups. Spring has to be my favourite time of year, with new growth and flowers reappearing after a long winter period.

Here are some tasks for March – With particular emphasis this month on lawn care:

BASKETS, TROUGHS & POTS:

If you have spring baskets that you have been growing on undercover and have been gradually hardened off and are now flowering, you may decide to put them out in situ. Be wary, though, as we can still get frost and snow in March.

If you decide to locate your baskets outside, make sure brackets and chains are safe and secure beforehand.

Consider re-potting containerized plants into larger pots with fresh compost and a slow-release fertilizer. You may also consider dividing them up to make more plants.



BEDDING:

Keep formal beds regularly weeded and increase the frequency if you can, as annual weeds will now not only be growing rapidly but also flowering and seeding as well, especially Chickweed, Groundsel and Speedwell.

BLOOM 2022:

Make sure you take photographs of your spring displays for your records and portfolio. Also, please take photos of any project work you may have done over the Winter and include them in your folder.

BULBS:

If you have snowdrops, once they have finished flowering, lift, and divide denser groups to thin them out and replant 'in the green' into other areas of the garden. Plant summer flowering bulbs such as Dahlias and Cannas but protect at night if there is frost.

HEDGES:

As it is an offence to disturb nesting birds, please inspect hedges before conducting any work. If you can, avoid any works on hedges at this time of year.

HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS:

These plants will be showing new growth now. Consider staking options for the larger subjects, using twigs, canes etc., to support them as they grow, rather than attempting to secure them once they are taller. It's also an excellent time to take cuttings of emerging shoots; it's another way of increasing your stock besides lifting and dividing.

LAWNS:

December and January, in particular, were very wet for most of us, and in our region, we thankfully missed most of the snow. As the ground is becoming a little less wet and warming up, now is an excellent time to put the lawn (or grass area) in order.

Condition of the lawn:

Depending on the condition of your lawn, it may need just a small amount of remedial work, or you may need to replace it altogether.

With conservation in mind and thinking about wildlife, you may want to change your more formal grass area into a wildflower meadow, which will not only benefit wildlife but is an educational asset and is exciting for young children to explore and enjoy.

Keeping to the traditional grass areas, firstly consider whether you need to conduct minor repairs or replacement, for which there are the usual two options – seed or turf.

Seed is by far the cheapest option, but you will have the birds feeding happily on newly sown areas, particularly feral pigeons. Another consideration is competing for weeds that will germinate in the same patch as the grass seed, and with any newly cultivated ground, will bring up stones to the surface, which may need to be removed. A seeded lawn will also take some time to establish.

The alternative is turf. This may be the best solution if you have small areas of grass to replace, but it will be expensive for larger areas. However, the effect is instant, and you won't have a pigeon or stone problem to contend with.

Before starting, consider what your lawn needs to improve and consider the practical and financial considerations.

A good start is to conduct seasonal maintenance, some of which you may have done last autumn. Rake out the dead thatch accumulated; this will enable you to see the issues, and what needs to be done. It's a good idea to then mow off the remaining thatch with a box mower set at a high height of cut.



De-compaction:

If the lawn is compacted and drainage is an issue - indicated perhaps by the excessive moss that may have been raked off, solid tine the area either with a machine or by using a garden fork inserted a good few inches into the surface at regular intervals across the lawn. This will help to relieve compaction. Then apply a fine loam soil that has been mixed with grass seed across the lawn and brush in. You can buy grass seed/spring fertilizer mix for this.

If your lawn has a severe drainage issue, you can hollow tine the lawn, which extracts cores of compacted soil, after which you will need to heavily top-dress with a friable loam to fill the holes. This will take much more soil than solid tining and can be expensive and time-consuming.

If the problems are severe, it may be that the underlying soil is thin and may sit on heavy clay, or the lawn is in heavy shade, in which case you may consider removing the lawn and either planting up with shade-loving plants – such as Hosta's or create a paved/patio area instead.



Patch repairing a lawn:

As mentioned above, this could be by seed or turf.

Start by cutting out the worn area into an excellent surrounding grass sward with a sharp half-moon edger and remove the worn grass and any weeds, digging out perennial weeds that may have taken hold.

If seeding, add a fine loam mix and bring up the soil level to the surrounding area, then firm the seeds – I tend to mix the seed with the loam and then apply – some of the seed will then be slightly below the surface – this way enough seed should survive the feeding birds - then firm and level. On completion, water in with a fine watering can rose.

If turfing, take out the old soil to a depth slightly less than the thickness of the new turf to allow for some settlement. Abut the new turf to the straightened edge of the existing sward (that you created previously with a half-moon edger). Try to fit the new turf snugly into the existing sward. The finished turf should be lightly compacted by standing on a plank, so the new turf matches the finished height of the existing sward. This will avoid hollows if too low or scalping with the mower if too high.

Creating a new lawn or repairing larger areas:



The area needs to be prepared well before seeding or turfing to allow settlement. Remove any perennial weeds, old tree, and shrub roots etc.

Lightly dig or rotovate the area, not going too deep as this will encourage stones to the surface and will be problematic when firming. Rake off any stones following digging (not so critical if you are turfing), then level and firm using the heel of your foot, walking across in different directions. Rake the area lightly after each firming operation. Do this several times until you are happy with the levels. If you can, before seeding or turfing, rope the area off and allow a little time for the soil to settle.

If the area is to be seeded, use a scaffolding board and a spirit level to get the area level if the area is not too large.

When seeding, the edges of the area need not be straight against the surrounding grass sward.

Once level, apply grass seed evenly by hand across the area, lightly rake the seed across the surface, then lightly firm and water in with a delicate rose. I tend to sow at a thicker rate than manufacturers suggest, and by raking in slightly, some of the seed will be below the surface and may survive pigeon attack!

Before mowing, leave until a good sward of germinating seed has been established.

Before the first mowing, walk the area to check for firmness and stones that may have surfaced and pick them off if you can. The first cut should be very light with the mower set to its highest setting, and ideally, a mower fitted with a full-width roller will help firm the surface evenly.

Gradually reduce the height of the cut with each consecutive mowing.

Suppose the area is turfed, level and prepared as above, with the final prepared soil level, just above the existing soil level to allow for settlement. Removing all but the smallest stones is not as critical with turfing as with seeding, as the turf tends to keep small stones rising to the surface. Having previously created a straight line along the existing turf, start to lay the new turf, working along a row, abutting the surrounding sward tightly and with each row of turf, make sure they closely abut each other.

Each row of turf should ideally be laid in 'brick fashion,' i.e. staggered. For example, if the first row was started with a total length of turf when you start to lay the second row, use half a turf to lay halfway along the length of the first turf. This will enable the turf to knit in better and reduce the likelihood of long cracks developing should the turf dry out during the first summer. Always work off scaffolding planks or similar when turfing, as you don't want to create divots with your feet! Once the whole area is laid, gently firm the area by standing on the boards, carefully working across it, or allowing it to settle naturally.

If the weather becomes dry and warm, ensure the newly laid turf is kept wet to avoid shrinkage. After a few weeks, check to see if the turf is knitting into the soil by carefully trying to lift a corner of one piece of turf; if there is any resistance, the turf is rooting in well.

Once rooted, the turf, when it shows signs of growth, can be mown by gradually reducing the height of the cut. A mower with a roller is preferable without helping the new lawn level and settle.



Other lawn works:

Another task this month, if you never got around to it in the Winter, is to redefine lawn edges, using a half-moon edger, whether the lawn's edge is with a footpath, a border, or a fence line. A good well-defined lawn can make such a difference to a garden.

Now is an excellent time to apply a spring feed to your lawn – that has a high nitrogen content now that the lawn is coming back into growth. Avoid applying on warm sunny days as it may scorch the lawn.

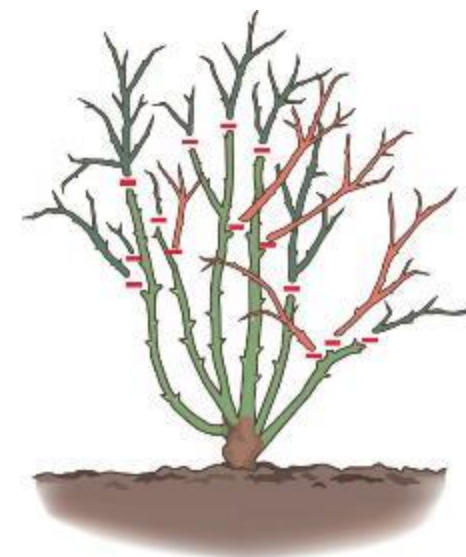
As mentioned earlier, instead of rectifying a poor lawn, do consider transforming it into a wildflower meadow!

PRUNING:

If your Forsythia and Winter Jasmine have finished flowering, prune back now to allow maximum growth to be produced for next year's flowers.

ROSES:

If you reduced the height of your Hybrid Tea roses last autumn, now is the time to conduct the final prune by reducing them down to about a half to a third, always cutting to an outward-facing bud and removing any dead, dying, diseased crossing over or thin growths.



SEED SOWING: (Annuals).

Continuing sowing Hardy Annuals (HA) even outside now.

As the weather should begin to warm up, consider sowing half-Hardy Annuals (HHA) too, but they may need protection as we may still get cold nights and frosts.

SHRUBS:

If your border does not have spring bulbs pushing through, consider dressing the beds with a mulch of Farm Yard Manure.

Happy Gardening and keep safe. See you next month – **Reg.**

The RHS Community Wellbeing Grant – closing date 7th March 2022

We are sure you have all seen this but in case....

To support communities to deliver gardening projects to improve wellbeing, the RHS has launched the [RHS Community Wellbeing Grant](https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/rhs-community-wellbeing-grant).

Successful grant recipients will receive between £5,000 and £10,000 to use with their participants in wellbeing gardening projects anywhere in the UK during 2022. Projects can cover a range of themes, such as skills workshops, developing an existing space or planting sessions – as long as Gardening and wellbeing are at the heart of it. The RHS Community Team are particularly looking for projects which are user-led and respond to the needs of the people who will benefit, increase access to Gardening and improve the skills and confidence of people who are usually under-represented in Gardening and are run by and for communities living in areas of high socio-economic deprivation.

The full criteria and eligibility for the grant, as well as the application form, can be found here - <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/rhs-community-wellbeing-grant> . The deadline for applications is 5 pm on Monday March 7th. Applicants will be emailed the outcome of their application by early April, and grants will be paid in April.

If you have any questions about the RHS Community Wellbeing Grant, please contact the RHS Community Team via email - communities@rhs.org.uk.

Please note that the grant is not open to mainstream schools, but most not-for-profit groups will be eligible.

Let's talk Houseplants

Jean Griffin 'Dip.Hort. (Kew)' South & South East in Bloom Deputy Chair



The Rosary Vine *Ceropegia woodii*

This trailing plant is a tuber forming succulent, making an unusual display, and talking point. It does well in a light and airy position. The plant has grey-green marbled fleshy foliage with a purple underside to the leaves. Needs very little attention.

Claw Cactus/ Easter Cactus/ Christmas Cactus are the common names for *Schlumbergera truncata*, properly termed succulents, not cacti!

There are now so many different colours available. Even one with a yellow flower. They have flattened segmented leaves. They like a warm position with filtered sun. Pot on every other year and feed after flowering with a potash based liquid fertilizer. Easy, peasy plants.





Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum raddianum*

This bathroom favourite has delicate green fronds and enjoys a warm shady spot. Feed only in Spring and Summer, with a general liquid fertilizer. To prevent leaf drop, stand the plant pot on a saucer of coarse grit to increase humidity, water sparingly in Winter

Polka dot plant *Hypoestes phyllostachya*

These dark green leaves are spotted bright pink or white! They are best treated as Annuals, but they make a great statement if two or three are grouped. A warm spot in filtered sunlight works best. Pinch out the tips quite often as they tend to become straggly.





How Amberol can help you meet the new Britain in Bloom sustainability criteria

Reducing our carbon footprint is one of the most significant challenges that we face as citizens of the world. This increased awareness of the importance of sustainability is reflected in the changes made to the 2022 Britain in Bloom judging criteria.

Following on from initiatives such as 'Greening Grey Britain' and 'Planet Friendly Gardening', the RHS has introduced the additions as a way of incentivising In Bloom groups to ensure that they are building in environmental measures as part of their work.

The changes, which come in the Environmental Management section (B3), encompass a range of areas, from promoting biodiversity to minimising chemical pest control. At Amberol, we welcome the increased awareness and promotion of environmental issues. As manufacturers of [self-watering planters](#) we are particularly interested to note the new criteria around water conservation.

Raising awareness of water conservation

In the 2022 criteria, community gardening groups are urged to consider water conservation by minimising water use and reducing reliance on mains water supplies. On its website, the RHS suggests several ways of doing this, including finding other ways to collect and distribute water e.g. through the use of water butts.

These strategies to reduce water use are to be encouraged; but they are also time consuming, especially for organisations that rely on volunteers. Which is why self-watering planters can be such an important part of your group's water conservation strategy at the same time as reducing maintenance demands.

How do self-watering planters work?

Amberol's self-watering planters use a specially developed watering system known as Aquafeed™. This system is comprised of a collection of high capacity capillary wicks that extract water from the subsoil water reservoir. The water is then dispersed evenly via special matting. This means that plants access moisture as and when required.

This means that even in the driest weather, most Amberol self-watering planters need to be topped up just once or twice a week at most.

In addition, because each planter has overflow holes, they cannot be overwatered, and issues such as overflow that are common when watering containers and hanging baskets are avoided.

More benefits of using Amberol self-watering planters

Maximum growth - Not only do self-watering planters reduce water consumption, they create ideal conditions for optimal growth because plants are able to access moisture and nutrients as required.

Environmentally friendly - All Amberol's black planters are made from recycled polyethylene. The coloured planters that we manufacture can all be recycled at the end of their lifespan, avoiding adding to the landfill problem

Longevity - Because Amberol planters last for so long (over 30 years and still going strong according to some of our long standing customers), they provide value for money as well as reducing material wastage.



How can Amberol help resolve your watering issues?

If you are pressed for time or funds to maintain your containers, Amberol's self-watering planters are an ideal solution. We are always happy to talk to you about your needs and to offer advice where required. We also offer virtual demonstrations so you can see our products up close and ask any questions that you may have.

Call 01773 830 930, email sales@amberol.co.uk or go to our [website](#) for more information or to book a no-obligation virtual demo.

My top five plants for Winter – Ruth Growney, Trustee, Judge & Britain in Bloom Judge

These are my top five winter flowering plants – a purely personal choice for the plants I love in the Winter. Some are chosen for their scent, some for their looks, but all are loved for bringing a smile to my face on a cold winter's day.



Top of my list is *Sarcococca confusa* – or to give it its common name, "Christmas or Sweet Box." This is the signature plant that I like to incorporate into a garden design whenever I can. It is a shade-loving plant, an innocuous evergreen that sits in the flower bed for 11 months of the year, nicely filling the space you have put it in. Then – in late December/early January, tiny creamy white flowers appear, and this otherwise non-descript plant repays you with interest with a heady scent that is quite extraordinary. You smell the flowers way before you can figure out where the aroma is coming from! Planted close to the house (where I have mine) or beside a seat; it is guaranteed to lift your spirits with its beautiful scent.

Daphne comes in at number 2 for the same reasons. Their perfume is as equally intoxicating as Sarcococca, with the bonus that the flowers can be quite showy. My personal favourite is *Daphne odora* **Perfume Princess**, which has fragrant pink flowers that started blooming this year in January and will continue well into the spring. Perfume Princess grows to around 1m x 1m, doesn't seem to mind the soil conditions or location (except an exposed location), and is happy in the sun or partial shade. The only thing they don't like (which I have found to my cost) is being transplanted. I have a very poorly daphne at the bottom of the garden that has not forgiven me for moving it! (Although I am hoping it will recover this year) The other two in my garden are quite happy and flowering their heads off.





My third choice would be hellebores. They are tough as old boots; their pretty flowers provide early nectar for insects, most are happy in the shade, and their leaves provide foliage interest all year round. Most will seed themselves readily. The range of colours and varieties available nowadays is vast although I have no idea of the name of my personal favourite in my back garden - I bought it for 50p at a car boot sale years ago!

In at number 4 is *Coronilla glauca*, a member of the vetch family. I have the variety "Citrina" in my garden. It is a small (90 cms) evergreen shrub with pretty blue-grey, pinnate leaves and rounded heads of small, incredibly fragrant, lemon-yellow flowers from late Winter right through to early summer (Mine has just started flowering). Although it looks pretty exotic, it is fully hardy and will grow happily in a range of sunny, sheltered habitats, although happiest in full sun on well-drained soil. If it starts to get leggy, you can hard prune it quite happily.





And last but by no means least are Pulmonarias (or lungworts to give them their common name- although I knew them in my youth as "soldiers and sailors"). The flowers of these compact herbaceous perennials come in a wide range of colours from white through to the deepest blue with pink and rosy, red thrown in for good measure; add in the fantastic variety of leaves ranging from silver to deeply mottled green, and you have a very striking garden plant that offers some of the earliest nectar for insects. They prefer light shade but will tolerate some sun, and the flowers die back in late autumn when it's the perfect time to lift and divide mature plants between making loads of new ones for you and your friends! They will also seed themselves readily about, but as hybrids, you can't guarantee that the seedling will be the same as the parent plant – but that's half the fun, I think!

South & South East in Bloom Seminar – RHS Gardens Wisley – March 30th

If you haven't booked yet, don't forget the closing date is March 16th

We have an exciting program with guest speakers, a Bloom Update, a guided mock judging exercise and a chance to visit the world-renowned gardens.

Preparing your Entry – Part 2

Continuing from last month, we look at the second opportunity to engage with the judges and show what you have achieved this month.

The presentation, provided before you start the tour, is an excellent way of showing judges the broader range of activities and your journey thus far. It might cover areas of interest that cannot be visited on the day.

The presentation, given for a maximum of 15 minutes, although not judged (as are the briefing notes or portfolio), can give the judges a greater understanding of what your community is about and the importance you hopefully place on Bloom, and therefore leads to additional marks.

The presentation can be in any form you wish, it can be a formal presentation via a PowerPoint, often given by larger entries, or something far more straightforward. Showing judges photos of events, work parties, and community get-togethers since the last judge's visit will help show your commitment to a year-round program and not just a couple of months of activity before judging. Showing projects that have been completed or are still under development will support your entry

If you can, it's always a good idea to align the presentation with the judging criteria so you don't miss an opportunity to elevate the judge's understanding of your achievements. But be careful NOT to duplicate what has been provided in the Judges Briefing Notes or Portfolio and try not to cover ground that the judges will see later on the visit. Tricky, I know, but you will be more successful if you separate what you do in each of the three phases.

One of the biggest reasons for NOT achieving an expected standard is missing to tell or show the judges all you do; as I have said many times before, do not assume judges will see all that should be seen and understand all you have achieved. Judges, like all of us, vary in their approaches to life. Some judges ask many questions, and others prefer to observe and listen to what has been said. So, the Briefing Notes/ Portfolio and the Presentation are vital areas to make sure the judges have all the facts as best as possible.

Any team member can give the presentation, but please make sure that the presenter answers any question that may arise. With the increase in concerns about the environment, global warming, and summer droughts, please try to include in your presentation what you are planning or have achieved to mitigate as much as you can in this area.

If you want any specific advice about Briefing Notes, Portfolios or Presentations, information will be in this year's entry manual. Please note IYN, Parks, and Parishes do not have to provide Briefing Notes, Portfolios, or presentations.

Best of luck

Ed:

Britain in Bloom Entries 2022

London in Bloom

Hale Village London - Small Town

Orpington1st BID - BIDs and Town Centres & City Centre Category

London also nominated the London Borough of Lambeth in Bloom, but sadly the City category will not run in 2022 due to a lack of entries.

South & South East in Bloom

South East

Canterbury in Bloom - Small City

Farnham in Bloom - Large Town

Petworth in Bloom - Small Town

Sevenoaks Town Council - BIDs and Town Centres & City Centre Category

Southern

Sandown Green Town Volunteers - Coastal

Shaftesbury in Bloom - BIDs and Town Centres & City Centre

Upton in Bloom – Town

We wish them all the best of luck for the July & August judging.